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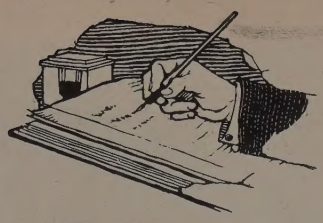

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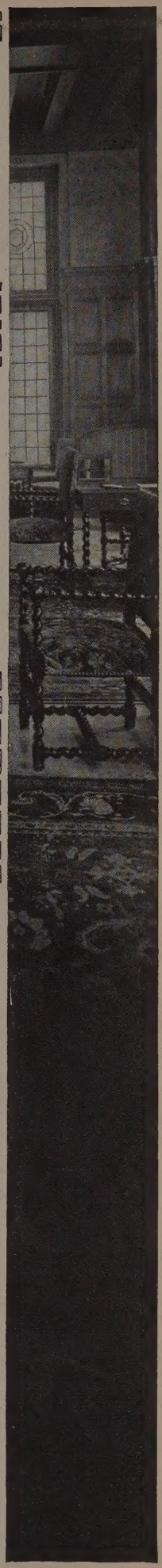



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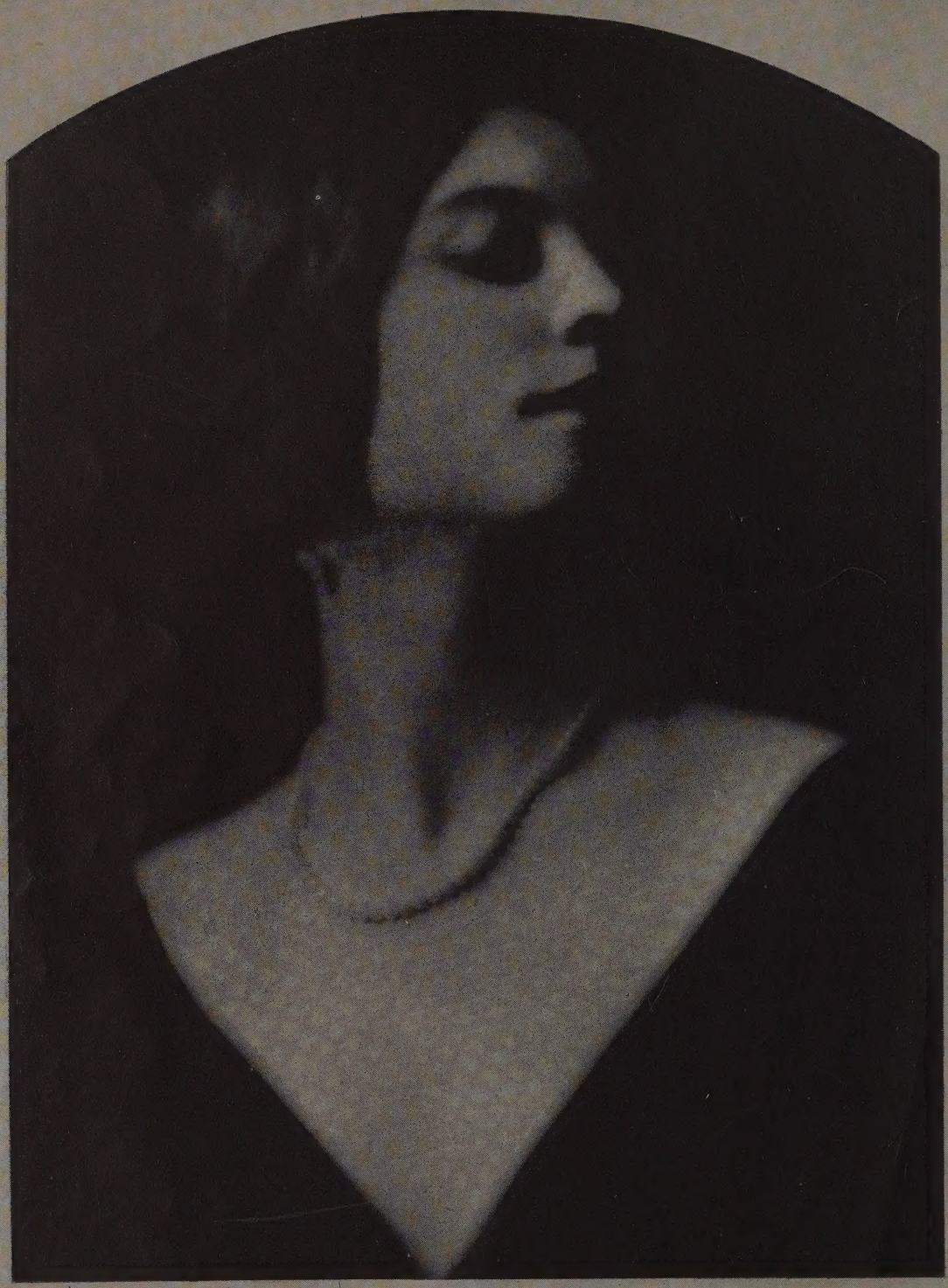

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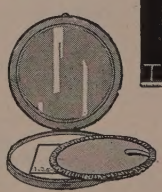

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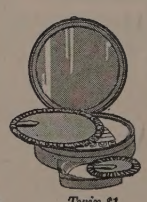

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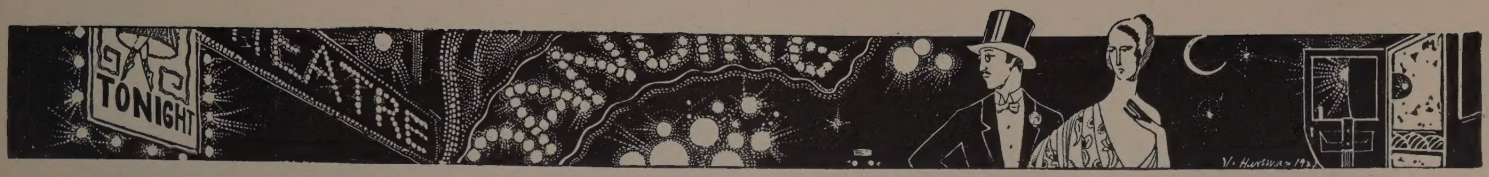


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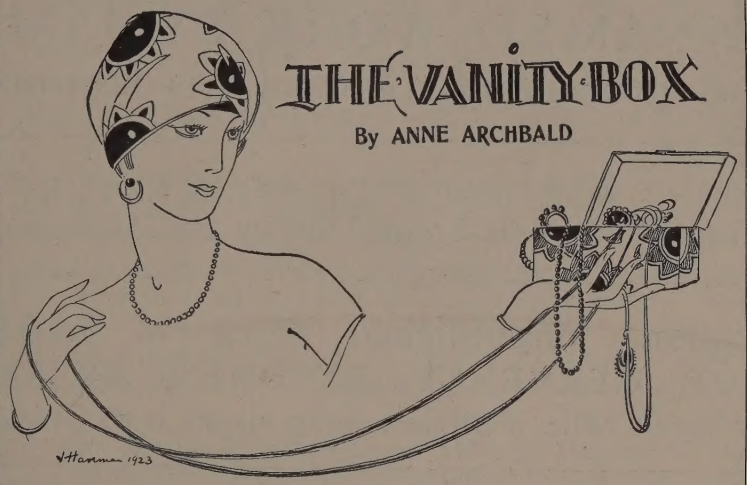

# THE VANITY BOX

By ANNE ARCHBALD

WE heard the explanation the other day as to why the luxurious siren type is so absorbingly interesting to other women while basically antipathetic. Not that we couldn't really have thought it out ourself if we had given our mind to it, for the explanation is ever so simple and obvious.

The reason, my children, that the siren type—"siren," by the way, being the later and preferred title, "vamp" being out of date—is of such interest to women is because she is so interesting to men. And that in turn is so because men are of such interest to her. They are her main interest, in fact. And she is cleverer than other women in discovering subtle arts that lure and conquer them. Or is it merely that she makes a more intensive study of men?

At any rate, other women find that they can learn much by observing the siren type. That the amateur, if we may express it thus, may profit immensely by the research work and the pragmatism of the scientist and the expert.

Which leads us to the introduction of the personality of Dagmar Godowsky, one of life's and the screen's best-known sirens. And here is a rather entertaining fact about Miss Godowsky. Though she perfectly fits in, as to physical appearance, with one's conception of what a siren should look like—dark hair drawn severely back from a classic forehead to a knot in the neck, pallor, red mouth, luminous eyes—her

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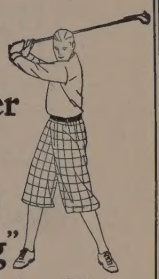

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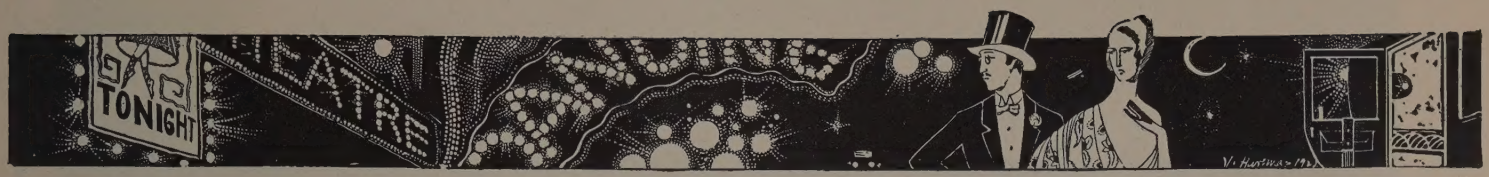
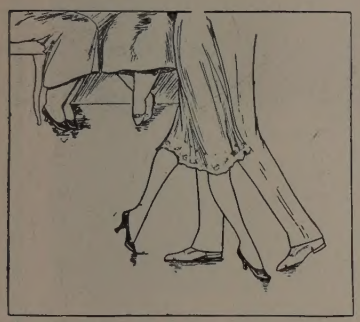




## Paris says 'shorter skirts



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temperament does not run true to type. That is, she is most simple and frank and straightforward in her dealings with the world, rather hale-fellow-well-met if anything. Perhaps in that, since we have just said that sirens are ahead of their sisters in what appeals to men you may choose to see the handwriting on the wall. We leave it to you to settle for yourself.

Personally we are going to concern ourselves with what we observed on Miss Godowsky's dressing-table when we last went to see her . . stuff sufficiently intriguing for anyone of you to wish to hear about. It has to do with a whole new set of French make-up . . with a foundation cream for the face, a rouge, a lip-stick and a liquid mascara. First of all our eye was caught by the look of the things, then our nose was enlisted in their favor, and lastly Miss Godowsky proceeded to demonstrate each and insisted on our trying them all, so that our reason was convinced.

The foundation cream was the most luscious pink shade, and it was scented with the most exotic of peach fragrance. "Peach cream"—and using it gave a soft glow to the complexion—in fact, was its name. Peach also was the fragrance in the rouge and the lip-stick, the former a very soft cream paste of an extraordinarily lasting and waterproof quality—we can bear witness—and a delightful variety of shades—a shade for every coloring.

As also with the lip-sticks, which are the rage with the younger set at the moment. When you go into the dressing-rooms of The Ritz or The Plaza out come these lip-sticks from the bag of every other young person present. They are a bit squat and chunky, in smart little cases of rose pink or ivory, and accommodate you with a beautiful red mouth. Peach flavor also, we said, didn't we?

By the way, we forgot to mention in speaking of the foundation peach cream that the rouge goes on first, then the foundation on top of that, and finally, of course, your powder. This gives to the rouge the utmost illusion of being true to nature.

With rouge, "peach cream," powder and lip-stick applied, you are ready for your liquid mascara, which has not only the merit of being waterproof and clinging—a good cry means nothing in its life—but is actually beneficial to the growth of the eyelashes. So many liquid mascaras, making the eyelashes brittle, break them off eventually.

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When planning a trip to New York, write for a copy of the latest PLAY GUIDE, enclosing 4c for mailing. If you live in New York, you will find it equally valuable for quick reference to all the plays on Broadway.

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A Turban in the Egyptian Manner
as youthfully interpreted by Le Monnier

*French Millinery Salon*

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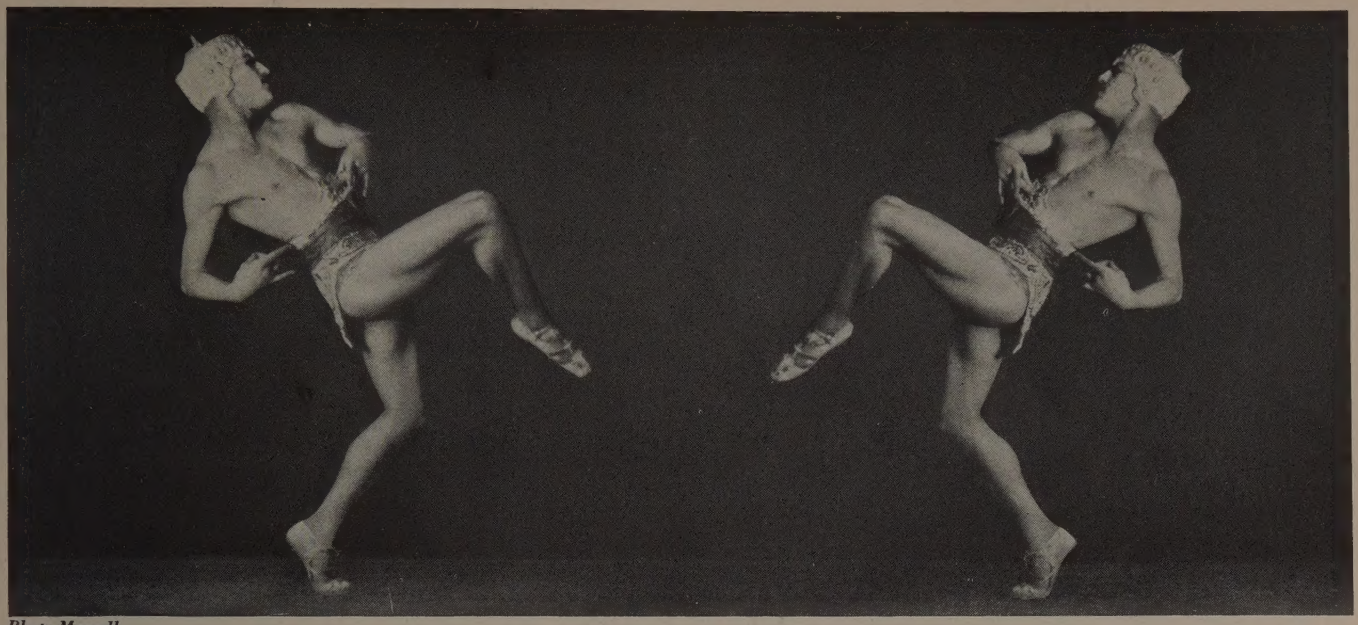

*Photo Morrall*

WITH pardonable pride the publishers submit the present number of THEATRE MAGAZINE to the discriminating reading public. For the beauty of its pictures, the interest and variety of its literary features the magazine is unsurpassed by any other of the month's publications. Where such an array of famous contributors? Where such a punch in each and every article? Where is the delightful art of the actor, the theatre discussed and reviewed with greater expertness, sophistication and charm? Not to read THEATRE MAGAZINE these days is not to be in the swim—theatrically speaking. You can't talk "theatre" unless you read THEATRE—you surely are smart enough to realize that. The moral is obvious. You can't afford to miss a single copy of THEATRE MAGAZINE.

### BROCK PEMBERTON ON THE LITTLE THEATRE

EACH new season the Little Theatre becomes more of a factor in the growth of the American theatre. Its influence over the so-called commercial theatre is distinctly felt and all concede it is an influence for betterment, making as it does for more originality, more vitality and greater breadth of treatment. To THEATRE MAGAZINE for March, Mr. Brock Pemberton, who produced Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and other plays appealing to the *intelligenzia*, contributes an article dealing with this interesting subject and showing what the Little Theatre has really done for our stage.

### READING THE "STARS"

WHAT does your favorite player's face reveal? Some people have a special gift for reading character merely by studying the lines of the face. Among the most successful of these analysts is Mme. de Revere, whose character estimates are extraordinarily revelatory. For THEATRE MAGAZINE, Mme. Revere has especially studied the faces of three actresses now prominent on Broadway, and in the March issue she will tell us what she finds there. She is very frank and penetrates through the human mask in a manner that will astonish you.

### BACK STAGE AT THE OPERA

WHEN you go to the Opera you marvel at the bigness of the spectacle—the massing of the supers, the dashing chariots, the intricate stage mechanism, the extraordinary light effects, and you wonder how such perfect precision is attained. In THEATRE MAGAZINE for March will appear an article called "Watching the Operatic Wheels Go Round." This will answer all your questions and more. You will agree it is the most interesting description of grand opera seen back stage that you've ever read.

## *Contents for* FEBRUARY, 1926


*SPECIAL ARTICLES*

*What Price Managers?* . . . . . 7
by NOEL COWARD

*Free Speech and Prim Print* . . . . . 9
by GILBERT W. GABRIEL

*The Phony Curtain Call* . . . . . 10
by JOHN S. HARKNESS

*Our Playwrights as Europe Sees Them* . . . 12
by ST. JOHN ERVINE

*Lehar Triumphs With New Paganini Operetta* . . . . . 20
by PAUL BECHERT

*The Face at the Box-Office Window* . . . . 22
by ADA PATTERSON

*Boston Honors Its Theatre* . . . . . 24
by STEWART BEACH

*Those Terrible Movies* . . . . . 32
by RALPH BLOCK

*SPECIAL FEATURES*

*The Editor's Uneasy Chair* . . . . . 5
*Young Woodley (Condensation)* . . . . . 26
*Mirrors of Stageland* . . . . . 30
*Heard on Broadway* . . . . . 38

*ART FEATURES*

*Cover: Irene Bordoni*
*On Fourteenth Street* . . . . . 36

*REVIEWS*

*Mr. Hornblow Goes to the Play* . . . . . 15
*Music* . . . . . 34
*Radio* . . . . . 37

*THE NEW PLAYS*

*The Cocoanuts* . . . . . 14
*Androcles and the Lion* . . . . . 17
*The Man of Destiny* . . . . . 17
*The Last of Mrs. Cheyney* . . . . . 19
*Morals* . . . . . 21

*FULL PAGE PORTRAITS*

*Walter Huston* . . . . . 4
*Arthur Hopkins* . . . . . 6
*Jacques Cartier* . . . . . 8
*Mary and Florence Nash* . . . . . 13
*Francis Wilson* . . . . . 25
*Helen Hayes* . . . . . 27
*Ruth Gordon* . . . . . 33

*DEPARTMENTS*

*The Vanity Box* . . . . . 3
*The Amateur Stage* . . . . . 39
*Fashions* . . . . . 42



Vol. XLIII Whole No. 299

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Louis Meyer—Paul Meyer, *Publishers*

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HAVE you seen *The Enemy*, the new play which Channing Pollock, author of *The Fool*, has written as a vigorous protest against war? Perhaps you have not had time to see this strong drama which is drawing crowds to the Times Square Theatre. If you can't go to the theatre you can at least read the play in THEATRE MAGAZINE. In the March issue you will find a condensation of this play which has powerfully impressed thousands.

### AMERICAN LABORATORY THEATRE

WHEN the Moscow Art Theatre came to New York it did more than astonish and entertain Broadway for a brief space of time. It awakened in theatregoers a consciousness of what dramatic art may really mean. Without intent, it pointed out the weakness of our "star system" and showed that the best results in the theatre are attained when each member of the cast is an artist and no character insignificant. In other words, it pointed out the value of true ensemble acting. Much of this spirit is evident in the American Laboratory Theatre, the members of which have given performances of *Twelfth Night* and *The Sea Woman's Cloak* at their theatre on Fifty-eighth Street. In the March issue of THEATRE MAGAZINE there will be an interesting article on the history and aims of this group who under the direction of Richard Boleslavsky are trying to follow the ideals of the great foreign repertoire companies where an actor is also a student.

### OUR DEPARTMENTS

EACH issue of THEATRE MAGAZINE is valuable, not only for the wealth of its articles and pictorial features, but for the expert reviews on current plays, concerts, operas, dance recitals, etc.

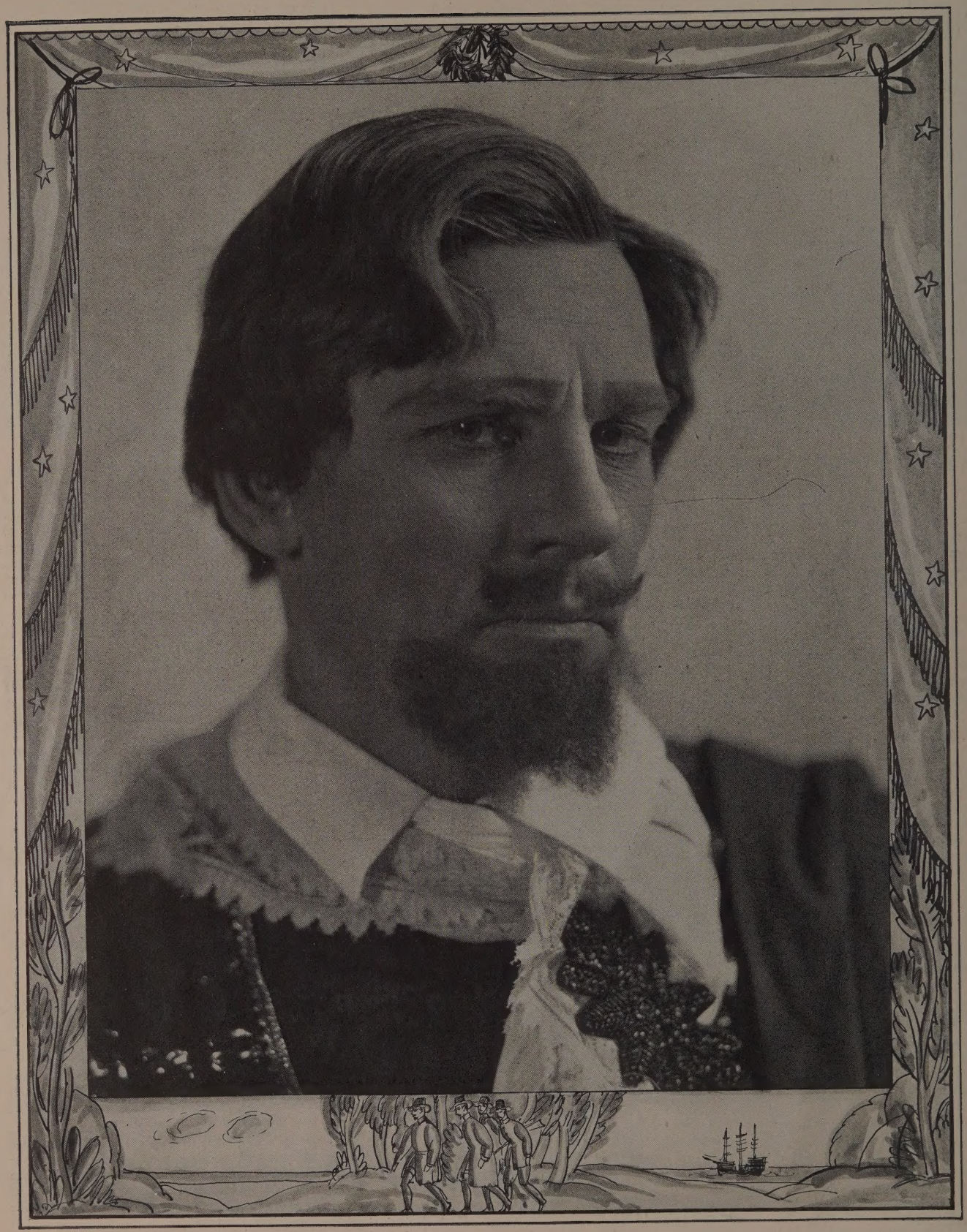
MUSIC: Besides giving reviews of all events which interest the musician and music lover, this department discusses the general condition in the present day realm of music here and abroad.

RADIO: Now that all the great figures of the stage are becoming more and more friendly to the microphone, no chronicle of the theatre would be quite complete without this department which tells of the activities of popular players when the public can only hear them.

FASHIONS: Each month THEATRE devotes several pages to beautiful pictures showing the latest mode as interpreted by the favorites of the footlights.

### PORTRAIT OF INA CLAIRE

ONE of the most popular pictorial features of THEATRE MAGAZINE is its beautiful monthly cover. On the March cover will be a charming picture of Ina Claire, who is now appearing with great success in *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney*.



WALTER HUSTON AS PONCE DE LEON

*In Eugene O'Neill's "The Fountain" gives a courtier-like performance of the aged Don Juan who finds the springs of eternal youth beyond death*

THEATRE MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY, 1926 ARTHUR HORNBLOW, *EDITOR-IN-CHIEF* VOL. XLIV. No. 299

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# *The Editor's Uneasy Chair*

## *The Theatre Ticket Speculator Must Go*

NOW that the Federal Court has upheld the constitutionality of the law against theatre-ticket speculation, and the Merchants' Association of New York has appealed directly to the Theatre Managers' Protective Association to put an end to the ticket scandal, we appear to be gradually getting nearer a satisfactory clean-up of this vicious, unbearable condition which, exasperating and driving away patrons from the box-office as it unquestionably does, is threatening the very life of the American theatre.

In spite of stringent laws, theatre-ticket speculation still thrives as one of Broadway's chief industries. The speculator has been driven from the sidewalk, but he still manages to ply his illegal trade. He contrives to secure the best seats for every attraction and the customer with a fat bank roll, who wants seats no matter what they cost, has the first call on every play in town. The managers, admitting their inability to cope with the nuisance, have always professed willingness to do anything to prevent this brazen robbery of theatre patrons, but up to the present they have done amazingly little.

The District Attorney has already shown commendable energy in enforcing the theatre-ticket law. His hand strengthened by the court decision, he has taken away the licenses of two offending agencies and threatens with the same drastic action every agency or speculator guilty of making illegal overcharge. At last something is really being done to drive the speculator out of business. While THEATRE MAGAZINE congratulates the playgoer on this promise of relief from an intolerable situation, we may also with modesty pat ourselves on the back. No one has fought the ticket speculator more energetically or more consistently than this publication. We have fought this evil because we consider the speculator, who takes a fat profit from the theatre to which he contributes nothing, a sinister figure working infinite harm to the drama's best interests. We have fought in the interest of the playgoer of smaller means who loves the theatre but who has been compelled to take undesirable seats, sometimes unable to secure seats at all, because another playgoer with a fatter wallet was willing and able to pay more. That was a vicious, unethical situation which simply could not continue.

Where does the speculator get the seats he sells? Largely from the agencies.

No one questions the fairness and square dealing of the agencies which sell at an advance of only fifty cents above the box-office price. But how can they control the sales they make? The speculator never has dealings with the agency direct. He has a sister-in-law, who has an uncle, who in turn has a nephew. The nephew opens a charge account at an agency. They look up the rating. Pays bills promptly. Credit is cheerfully given. The nephew starts in to buy seats—four a day or more at each agency. These seats once secured—and being a new, prompt pay customer, he gets the best—they are passed back to the uncle, who in turn passes them to the sister-in-law, who gives them to the speculator. The agency soon discovers that their own seats are in the speculator's hands and tries to find out how they were sold, but it is impossible to trace them beyond the innocent appearing nephew who, of course, has the right to make a present of theatre tickets to his uncle if he wants to. That is only one way in which the speculator gets his supply, enabling him to gouge the public and thumb his nose at the manager and the law.

The only way to suppress the ticket speculator is to go after him tooth and nail. The District Attorney's office, backed up by the Federal Court ruling, has made a good beginning. Let the good work go on.

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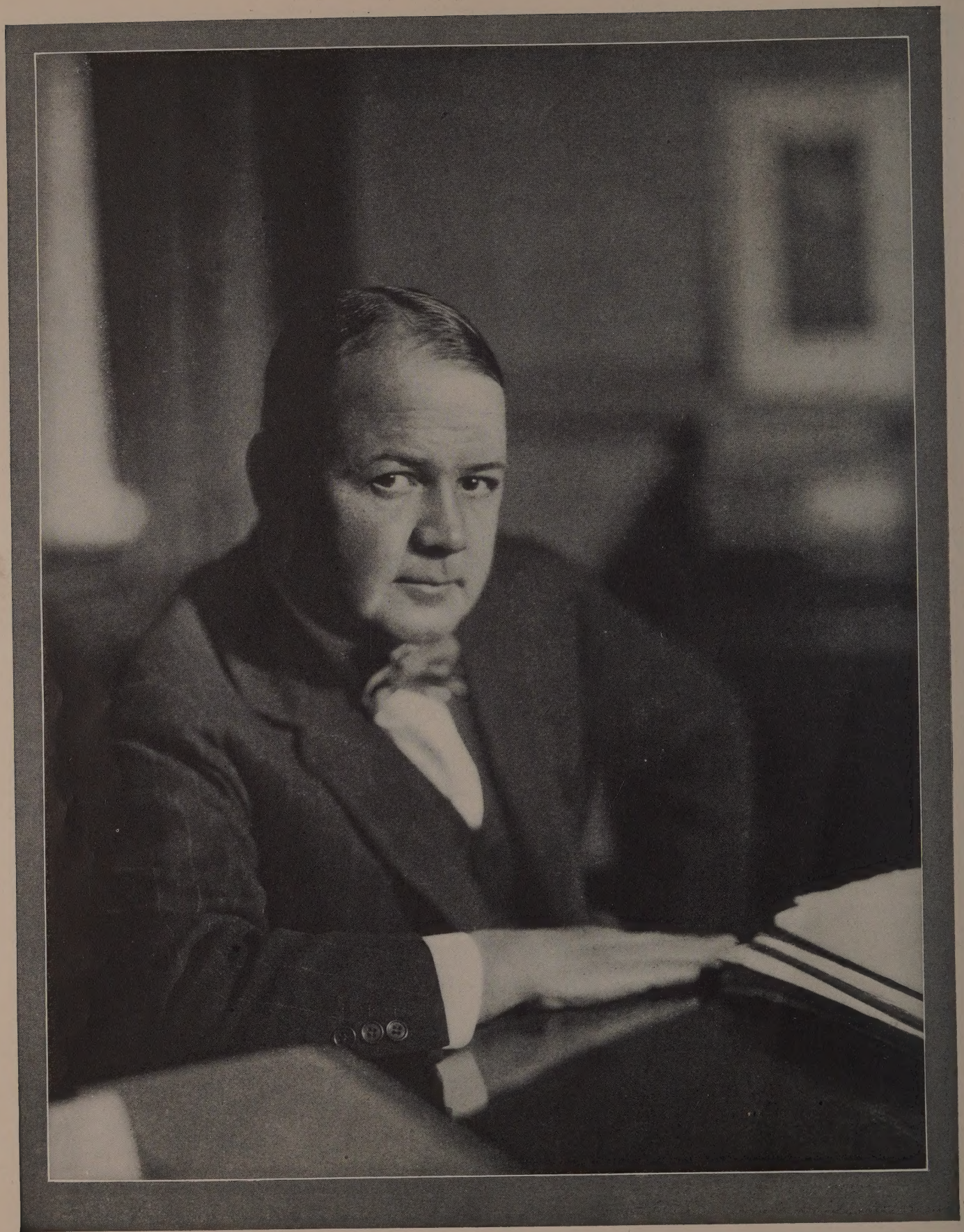
## *G. B. S. In An Altruistic Mood*

NO matter how important and serious the occasion, that international jester, Bernard Shaw, must have his little joke. At a recent lecture, delivered before the London Fabian Society, which, as everyone knows, includes among its members some of the wildest-eyed, longest-haired parlor radicals in England, the famous Irish-English playwright declared that the first postulate of the Socialist is that everybody must have the same income, an absurd doctrine, of course, and the utter fallaciousness of which was fully demonstrated when the Bolshevists recently enforced its practical application in Russia.

Coming from the author of *Candida,* however, the suggestion takes on new life and interest. Most Socialists believe with their master, Karl Marx, that in a revolution they have "only their chains to lose, a world to gain." It would mean little or nothing to their own pockets if all individual fortunes and incomes were commandeered and pooled in the common interest. Not so with Mr. Shaw. To-day the playwright is a rich man. His royalties from plays performed in America alone bring him in large sums yearly. How, therefore, can one question the sincerity of his present noble gesture? If words mean anything, the Sage of Adelphi is willing to sacrifice any part of his own generous income so that equal division may be made with persons less fortunately situated than himself.

Only a few steps from Adelphi Terrace, where the dramatist has his luxurious, artistic home, is the Thames Embankment, the grimy, hard benches of which after dusk are crowded with the recumbent forms of London's down and out—starved, destitute wretches who have not the price of a lodging. Nightly this army of England's unfortunates bring their rags and misery to the playwright's very door. Could Mr. Shaw ask for a better opportunity to carry his theory into practice? It will no doubt be a great privilege and joy for him—than whom there is no one more shrewd and uncompromising when making a business deal—to confound a skeptical world by affording it this unprecedented spectacle—a celebrated, opulent *littérateur* distributing his own earnings among the tattered and homeless until all his surplus has been used up and he left with no more than the lowest pauper among them. When Mr. Shaw sets this fine example to a material, selfish world, then we shall begin to take his socialistic utterances seriously. Until he himself leads the way, such Utopian rhetoric must be dismissed for what it is—only another sample of the sardonic Shavian humor.



*Florence Vandamm Studio*

## THE PRODUCERS. No. 4. ARTHUR HOPKINS

*The producer of "What Price Glory?" stands almost alone in the managerial field in that he combines the mental make-up of the commercial and the art producer. He began his career as a newspaper man and his first theatrical venture was "The Poor Little Rich Girl" at the Hudson Theatre in 1912. The success of this play encouraged him to continue, and later enterprises, particularly the productions of O'Neill's "The Hairy Ape" and "Anna Christie," and the launching of John Barrymore as a star, established him definitely as one of the leaders among American producers of the first class*

# What Price Managers?

*Growth of the American Theatre Threatened by an Illiterate Commercialism*

By NOEL COWARD
*Author of "The Vortex," "Easy Virtue," Etc.*

IN giving any real, unprejudiced opinion of the American theatre it is necessary for me to discount the extraordinary generosity and kindness with which I have been welcomed in this country. Speaking from my own personal experience, the American theatre appears to be well beyond all superlatives of praise, but regarding it from a purely artistic standpoint, there are naturally several seriously detrimental factors to be taken into consideration.

Principal among these is the deep-rooted doctrine on the part of American managers and producers to pander to the half-educated and illiterate among their audiences rather than the rapidly growing number of receptive intelligences who are not only becoming capable but eager to appreciate the best in drama rather than the second best. Whenever a false, sentimental and generally unworthy play turns out to be a success, the managers defend themselves by declaring that that is what the public wants. This is basically untrue. To begin with, no one knows what the public wants, apart from their natural desire to be either interested, amused or thrilled, and these innocent demands can be catered to by good plays just as easily as bad ones.

THE psychology of the American theatregoing public seems to me to be intensely interesting. The American nation, being comparatively young, is as yet untainted by the after-dinner, *blasé* complacency of England and the satiated sex curiosity of France and Germany. It appears anxious to be instructed as well as to be amused, accepting what it is given and trying to make the best of it. The triumphant and continued success of the Theatre Guild is proof of this. They have built up, without any terrific opposition, an enormous public for intelligent plays, irrespective of their commercial values. They are to-day indisputably the greatest power in the English-speaking theatre, owing to their determination to present plays of every nationality from the best artistic standpoint. If there were only a few similarly organized play-producing committees in the other big cities of America, surely the much maligned Middle-West would no longer be surfeited with second-rate offerings, and there would perhaps be more opportunity for the bulk of the American population to learn to appreciate the true values of the drama.

Viewed in the abstract, the average commercial manager is an infinitely pathetic figure. His life is spent in a constant haze of bewilderment. He has moments of fierce joy when a Cinderella story falls into his lap, and moments of equally fierce agony when he rejects something far superior to the Cinderella story and watches it launched by someone else with tremendous success. His mind being naturally unequal to the task of discrimination, and completely unfitted to grapple with anything but the obvious, he labors for years under the naïve delusion that he knows what the public wants, and finally retires into obscurity, either with a fortune which he could have acquired with infinitely less trouble in Wall Street, or else with no fortune at all, and not even the solace of having achieved anything in life worth having.

Noel Coward, the brilliant young English playwright, whose drama, *The Vortex,* has been the sensational success of the present season, has this to say of our American theatre:

**"The American theatre is beyond all superlatives of praise. But there are detrimental factors."**

**"Sad, grotesque figures are allowed power in your theatre."**

**"The commercial manager is the symbol of all that is destructive in the progress of true drama. He panders to the half educated and illiterate."**

**"The managers declare that is what the public wants. This is basically untrue. No one knows what the public wants."**

Yet these sad, grotesque figures are allowed power in the theatre—real, definite power. Thousands of intelligent actors, actresses, playwrights, scene designers and musicians are dependent on them for their livelihood. Their judgment is regarded as important and their position unassailable. Potential actresses of genuine value give themselves up without a murmur to the strange process of being moulded into "stars." They are given second-rate material on which to lavish the best of their quality, and after so much wasted time they achieve their much-prized and overrated goal and become "stars." Cunning hack-writers are paid large sums to write "vehicles" around their thumb-marked personalities, and year in and year out they are hustled in luxurious drawing-room cars from city to city, playing the same part over and over again, achieving nothing but large salaries and extreme monotony.

Plays of intelligence and constructive merit they never see, being far too occupied in following diligently the judgment of the man who "made them." Sometimes later on in life, they become aware of a gnawing dissatisfaction—a half-conscious envy of those who have not a following among the illiterate majority, but who can boast a certain amount of respect from the intellectual few. This tardy restlessness generally culminates in a mad, hysterical rush at Shakespeare, who frequently totters and falls flat under the impact. Then the inevitable bitter retreat, disgruntled and disillusioned, to the Cinderella story and the public that has lost faith.

THIS situation has, I believe, occurred scores of times in America, and the blame must be laid uncompromisingly at the door of the commercial manager. He is the symbol of all that is destructive in the progress of true drama, and he is permitted to flourish because of the well-worn fallacy that people must make a lot of money in order to live happily. It is depressing to reflect on the comparatively sparse number of people in the theatre who realize that it is both preferable and possible to make a sufficient income by clinging to their ideals.

Although most people start out with the determination to do good work, so many allow their original ambitions to be side-tracked and their vision blurred by the transitory situation of star dressing-rooms and electric lights stabbing out their names in different colors. Not that these ear-marks of success are to be sneered at—they undoubtedly stand for something—but their exact positions as mile-stones in the individual career should be judged as being nearer the beginning than the end.

With the sudden first-night triumph, when people have cheered and wept and flung themselves into one another's arms, begins the real battle. Before, there have only been the more obvious worries of life, such as getting work and supporting oneself and one's dependents, and keeping up appearances, but with stardom come the myriad subtle responsibilities which so few seem capable of realizing to the full. To retain one's integrity in a moment of triumph is infinitely more difficult than having to face failure.

The commercial manager again blunders at this point and often does incredible harm. He becomes craven and adulatory, where before he had been domineering and unsympathetic. The pressure of what lit-

(*Continued on page* 56)

HARLEQUIN

*Jacques Cartier, now touring with the Albertina Rasch Ballet, caught in a pose suggesting all the grace and agility of the classic Arlecchino*

(Camera Study by Nicholas Haz)

# Free Speech and Prim Print

*Why May the Actor Speak Words That No Newspaper Dare Publish*

By GILBERT W. GABRIEL

LET my first protest be a purely personal and defensive one. This article is the work of an averagely obscene man, a dabbler in normal amounts of profanity, vulgarity and traveling-salesmen anecdotes. I used to scribble things on walls when I was young, and, now that I am partly grown-up, I sometimes win the same delight and relief from writing dramatic criticisms for a daily paper.

In short, I am not entering this argument with inhumanly clean hands. Nothing that can be said either on the stage or in print is liable to shock me out of my wondering about the necessity for its saying. That is the question I want to put: why does the modern stage have to fall back on the uncouth and the perverse as the one sure bait to catch reality? And then, why is the stage permitted to use this bait, and why is the newspaper, the very next morning, denied the same license?

A critic went lately to review the Molnar comedy with which the Theatre Guild began its season. His report of the event, meeting the ever so liberal eye of his managing editor, had hastily to be changed. Three offending words were cut out—and they were three words taken directly from the Molnar script.

I cannot question the right of this critic's employers to reject unfortunate examples of his vocabulary, even when it borrows from the vocabulary of Molnar. Neither am I in any singular state of mind to quarrel with the Theatre Guild for repeating nightly these plain, unequivocal words. But what I do want to determine is the reason for this blanket permission conferred on the stage to say bluntly what it pleases on whatever subject it likes. And why that even more immediately mirror of life, the daily press, has no such sanction.

NOR is it only the newspaper which meets up with this public prohibition. I have seen things taken lightly for granted and exhibited in plays and revues of the past two years which have driven off the book-shelves novels that treated these same things seriously, sympathetically and much more finely.

James Joyce's masterpiece, "Ulysses," scurries around in private circulation because it includes episodes of bodily functions; and Arnold Bennett, author himself of such beady stuff as "The Book of Carlotta," can then decry this work of a melancholy Rabelais as "scatalogical." (It is a scientific adjective, but not a nice one.) Yet I have already seen two plays this season which contain frank references to the same physical commonplace, and which are accepted by their audiences with candid merriment. Such are the inhibitions of print, I must be evasive about the incident even when discussing it—and I am jealous of the drama which does not have to be the same.

Similarly, the theatre has suddenly thrown open its trap and summoned up the various subjects of degeneracy and perversion. What few novels I know which treat of this wry phase of life dare scarcely hint at it before they scuttle away into the safer and more popular passions. The best I ever read is still in manuscript, waiting a publisher who is willing to risk such fate for it as has befallen its fellows. The only places you can learn of perversions, to-day, are in medical texts and at the theatre.

For, weak stomachs to the contrary notwithstanding, the present-day theatre has a hundred and one mentions and dramatizations, burlesque or otherwise, of the poor, unnaturally bent wretches. The revues are chock-full of horrible, flip jeers at sissies and red neckwear, and more and more comedies make loose use of minor buffoons whose lisping, gestures and costuming are shown up with unmistakable glee.

When sex in its most diversified sense is the subject, the whole subject, of a Wedekind tragedy, nor I nor anyone has just cause for screaming at it. Not in this day of Freudian facts and casual revelations. But when an uncomfortable, evirated freak is squeezed into a concoction only in order to add the juice of a little unusual naughtiness, I think the stage is making shabby use of its new freedom. And I confess that I, for one, prefer visiting the Zoo and observing the droller, more unconscious antics of a hamadryad baboon. But that is aside from my main query. Why is it that the stage finds episodes and characters like these convenient, necessary, justified? Why the stage, when newspapers are granted no place for them?

There is such a scene—indeed the sourest and most repulsive I have ever witnessed—in Mr. Sidney Howard's latest play, "Lucky Sam McCarver." If it achieved great theatrical ends, I presume there would be no sustaining occasion to deride the means. But there is precious little satisfaction to be had from a big he-man who, enraged among a parcel of decadents, bellows at them all in a commonest barroom lingo, proud to be calling a spade a dirty spade. If I were to quote his denunciations word for word, this issue of this magazine would probably be suppressed. I don't know why, but it would. For the present, leave it at that.

When *What Price Glory?* was here, I hailed it as high as any, and realized the grisly profanity of it as an imperative virtue, a coloring absolutely needed in any true picture of the late war and its modes and manners. There the crudities had meaning as well as force; there was almost a paradoxical spirituality about them.

BUT such slap-dash use of the famous double-jointed cuss-word, and of the jocose references to illegitimate parentage, were destined to decay into silly, useless oathing in a hundred and one plays which have come after. And it matters little what sorts of plays, either. In drawing-rooms, boudoirs, counting-houses, box cars or Circassian walnut libraries, wherever a good three-quarters of the dramas of this season set their scenes, you may rely on hearing at least one or two terse requests to the Deity to damn somebody or something. The stage is become just a little boy who knows at last that lightning will not strike him dead, nor playjuries exterminate him utterly, because, half boastful and half scared, he mumbles naughty words.

But why should—and must—the newspapers refrain from using the same undoubtedly vivid and popular language? Why do novels, when put to the same task as plays of reproducing human talk verbatim, restrict themselves to one-tenth the forthrightness and singleness of speech? Why should the recent accounts in morning journals of a debauch of "three men with high-pitched, effeminate voices" have to indulge in such circumlocution when Mr. Howard's play may sum up what was wrong with this party in one word of usual, street-corner terminology?

I took the question to the keenest newspaper executive I know. I fear he thought me a dunce for asking it.

"Why, don't you realize that a newspaper goes into the home? And that it stands the chance of being read by the little girls in that home?"

(*Continued on page* 56)

**Gilbert W. Gabriel who, from now on, will contribute frequently to THEATRE MAGAZINE, has gained a large following of readers by his brilliant reviews as dramatic critic of the New York *Sun*. Formerly music critic of the same paper for nine years, he has also written several books, one a novel, *Brownstone Front*, and collected dramatic reviews and essays. A forcible writer on the theatre, his critiques in the *Sun*, notable for their sanity, their good judgment and sophistication, have given him an enviable standing among metropolitan critics and gained for him many readers among those who like to be kept well informed in theatre matters.**

# The Phony Curtain Call

*How Muscular Hands, Discreetly Used, Bring Fame to Stage Performers*

By JOHN S. HARKNESS

HIS name is Polst. By day he wielded the razor in a barber shop. By night he was the Warwick of the Opera. He *was,* for, like Lucifer, he fell. To-day the leader of the *claque* at the Metropolitan is no longer he, and yet his spirit, the spirit which makes or unmakes a tenor in a night, lives on.

All operagoers must have seen him night after night heading his cohorts in the gallery and behind the orchestra rail—a little, black-haired man in a dress suit—not from Savile Row—and a silk hat—perhaps born in Bond Street, but long acclimatized to Broadway rainy nights. Polst was known as "The Man with the Iron Hands"—and he deserved the title. For little Polst was mighty—just as his successor is to-day—for Polst was the symbol of the mightiest force in opera, the symbol of Things as They Are Not. It is said that Polst fell because he revealed in an unlucky interview the Secret of Polichinelle, the secret which all the world knew, the secret that there was a *claque* at the Metropolitan Opera House. At all events, fall he did. To-day his body is re-absorbed in the barber business, but, like John Brown, his soul still marches on! For at Broadway and Thirty-ninth Street the *claque* lives, thrives and all but reigns! By their hands ye shall know them—and their hands are mighty and never tiring. It takes extraordinary merit to upset the equilibrium of an ordinary Metropolitan audience, but the *claque* makes the average auditor—and the singer applauded—think it has been done.

Any night, back in the gloom of the still darkened theatre, ushers and manager may be seen trying to turn a "frost" into some semblance of a hit by stimulating an apathetic audience into raptures of enthusiasm

THE symbol of Things as They Are Not—that is the *claque.* Fame made to order, thrills—to the artist—bought and paid for—and a general nuisance to all real music lovers—that, too, is the *claque.* Despite its presence in certain Broadway theatres, the *claque* is not American. It is as Italian as spaghetti. Though Polst himself was not an Italian, the hands he directed were the horny hands belonging to the sons of sunny Italy. And for this there was a reason. For a complete *claqueur* mere strength of palm will not suffice. A *claqueur* must believe in the holiness of his mission, his hand-beats must be as his heart-beats, inevitable, given with the whole fervor of his being. He must feel that upon his efforts hangs the future of the new Caruso, that without him opera will freeze to death under the chilly silence of a Nordic audience. He may be, he probably is by day a shoeblack, but by night he is a soldier waging heroic battle under the artistic standard of his native land against the cold callousness of the alien! And, like the soldier, he must be disciplined. His heart must be warm, but if left to itself it would run away with his hands. Therefore the *claque* must have a general—therefore Polst, and whoever has succeeded Polst. And this general is always present on the firing line, and woe betide the soldier who beats his palms when the chief has not first given the signal. Hereafter he will have to be content with his barbering!

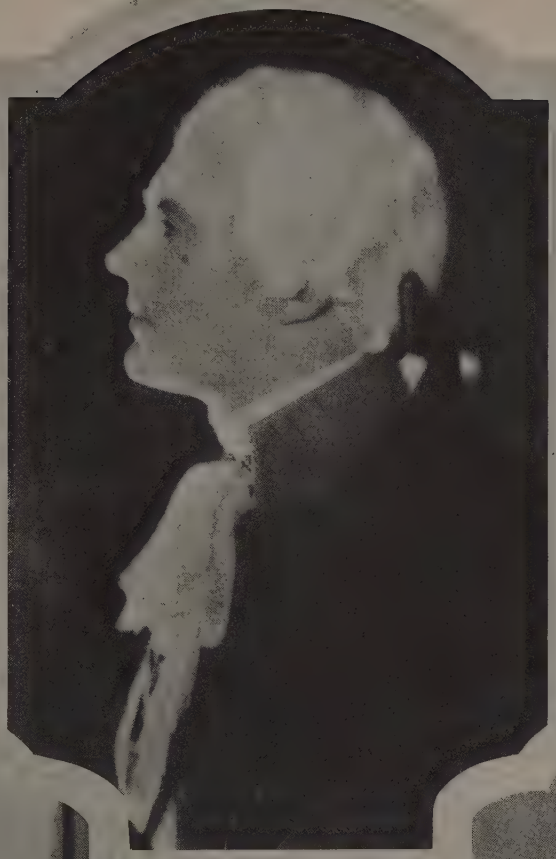
The powers that be at the Metropolitan have always insisted that the theatre maintains no official *claque.* Perhaps this is true in the sense that it has never been diplomatically recognized, but it is dollars to doughnuts that it would frown upon any soldiers of fortune who tried to form their own cohorts behind the rails. At times indeed there have been rebellions among the *claqueurs,* resulting in the formation of a counter *claque,* the members of which are said on divers occasions to have attempted to hiss the favorites of the rival *claque.* But this state of affairs was speedily ended. A *claque* to be effective must be one and indivisable—and blackmail must be frowned upon. Of course this has not always been known by the young artist, and more than one singer has paid tribute to an impostor, with the result that he was wiser but received not a single handclap.

Only one artist at the Metropolitan ever made use successfully of an unofficial *claque.* Geraldine Farrar frowned on the *claque,* but in the place of the professionals she had a body of enthusiastic amateurs who were extraordinarily effective. The Gerry flappers have now gone into history. They were a body of young women, devoted admirers of the one and only Gerry, who attended every performance at which she sang, buying their own seats and applauding almost hysterically every entrance and *aria* of their idol. For once the professional *claque* was put to shame. Never was such a demonstration staged at the Metropolitan as that staged by the Gerry flappers at their Geraldine's farewell, when at the final curtain they unfurled banners, threw serpentines and confetti, cheered for nearly an hour and ended by propelling Miss Farrar bareheaded and still in costume into an open automobile and escorting her in triumph up Broadway. Such things as these happen but once in a lifetime—while the *claque* must function every night.

The triumph of Lawrence Tibbett in *Falstaff* was one of the few times when the *claque* got in its own way. The *claque* that night was primed to bring fame to another artist, and made itself so obstreperous in insisting that he and he alone should bear away the prize, that for once the audience itself got on its ear. Mr. Tibbett, an utterly unknown singer, the audience liked, though probably liked not half so much as afterwards appeared evident from the tumult of its applause. But at all events it liked him enough to resent having its liking drowned out by a crowd of Neapolitans behind the rails. The Nordic worm turned and became suddenly a dragon, and the dragon's roar catapulted the modest Mr. Tibbett into fame and fortune. That night to an American audience opera became suddenly a living thing.

But the management of an opera house knows that these things are rare, and

(*Continued on page* 56)



*(Below)*
CRANE WILBUR
Movie fans who breathlessly watched the activities of this actor in *The Perils of Pauline* would hardly recognize him as the austere and scheming Bishop in Eugene O'Neill's poetic drama, *The Fountain*

*Francis Bruguière*

IAN HUNTER
English leading man, who made his American début in George Tyler's production of *The School for Scandal*, giving to his characterization of Charles Surface a romantic dash and charming impudence which won him immediate favor

*(Below)*
MAX FIGMAN
No small factor in the success of *The Vagabond King* is this experienced comedian, who not only infused dramatic spirit into his staging of this operetta, but in which he also gives a striking impersonation of Louis XI

*Wide World Studio*

## ROMANCE STILL HOLDS THE STAGE

*Despite the modernization of Shakespeare, satin breeches and powdered wigs equal in number the brown derbies and golf sweaters of this season's theatre*

# Our Playwrights as Europe Sees Them

*America Still Too Much Influenced by the Old World for Its Plays to Have Weight Across Seas*

By ST. JOHN ERVINE

I WAS lately asked to say what influence American dramatists are having on English audiences, and at first my instinct was to reply, "None at all," but on turning the matter over in my mind, I felt that I must qualify that statement a little. The answer depends upon what is meant by "American dramatists." If by this expression is meant authors writing for the regular theatre, the "legitimate" theatre, as it used to be called in the days when the music halls were flourishing, then the answer remains as I first thought of it; but if the expression is enlarged to include the authors of coon songs, jazz songs and moving pictures, then the answer is far different.

America does not influence Europe in the smallest degree, so far as the regular theatre is concerned, for the excellent reason that America is still being extensively influenced by Europe. A high percentage of the plays performed in New York every year are the work of European authors: a too tiny percentage of the plays performed in Europe every year are the work of American authors; and that tiny percentage, for the most part, is performed in England, but is not memorable.

EUGENE O'NEILL is the only American dramatist whose work is known in Europe, but it would be foolish exaggeration to say he is widely known. More of his plays have been done in England than in any other European country, and one of them, *Anna Christie,* has been performed in London and the provinces many times. All the English critics are familiar with his work, even that which has not yet been performed in England, but there are no signs visible yet that he has exercised any influence over other dramatists. Another American dramatist, Miss Susan Glaspell, is becoming known in England, though I doubt if she is known in any other European country; but she is better known as a novelist than as a dramatist. I imagine that these two are the only American dramatists who are known in Europe in the sense in which we say that Mr. Bernard Shaw or M. Brieux or Señor Benavente or Signor Pirandello or Herr Ernst Toller or Chekhov are known. A very able American dramatist, Mr. James Forbes, has never had the success in England that his work deserves. Mr. Sidney Howard will shortly have a play, *They Knew What They Wanted,* done in London, and may repeat here the success he has had in New York. For some unaccountable reason, a really distinguished play, called *Beggars on Horseback,* was not a success in London. Its authors will probably win favor in England with another piece.

It will seem odd to say that American authors have no influence in England, considering how many American plays are done here, but we are using the word "influence" in its most important sense. An author influences people when he changes their beliefs and creates a new style of writing plays. Ibsen influenced the whole world of the theatre. Mr. Shaw has profoundly influenced authors and audiences. Toller may influence many, though so far his followers are concerned chiefly with his oddities rather than his genius, and his machinery rather than his matter. But no American dramatist has yet influenced anybody outside his own country, and it may be doubted whether many persons have been influenced inside it. I cannot remember ever to have read or seen an American play which made me realize that its author had accepted Eugene O'Neill or Miss Susan Glaspell for a master. I do not doubt that the time of influencing will come or that it will come quickly. All I am asserting is that it has not yet done so. When Mr. O'Neill's play, *Desire Under the Elms,* was done in Germany lately, the critics almost unanimously said that this was the sort of thing that was better done there. They may have been boasting in vain, but my point is that none of them said they had never seen a play of that kind. Mr. O'Neill, in short, did not start a revolution as Ibsen started one, as Mr. Shaw started one, as Chekhov started one. That is as far as one can go in regard to the regular theatre.

But when we turn to that looser world which contains jazz and moving pictures, we detect something different. America in the regular theatre is still profoundly affected by Europe. Nearly everything that she does in the regular theatre is derived from some European source. But her coon songs, her jazz songs, her moving pictures are native things, owing little or nothing to Europe; and, like all native things, spun out of the spirit of the people themselves and not borrowed from others, they are influencing and affecting other nations. I cannot speak for other countries so well as I can speak for my own, and so I shall confine what I have to say on the subject to England. There is no doubt whatever that the moving picture is remarkably influencing the multitude in Great Britain. American turns of speech are creeping through the captions into the every-day speech of Englishmen. English children, especially in poor parts, who get a great deal of their amusement in picture palaces or movie theatres, are becoming increasingly familiar with American slang. The influx of American soldiers and sailors into England during the war naturally made people familiar with much of it, but a generation has nearly grown up since the war and we might expect to find the slang learnt then to be forgotten now. The moving picture has kept it alive and increased it. I have actually heard an English actor in an English society play say, "Yah" for "Yes," without being rebuked or booed. I am no longer astonished when I hear English business men say, "Yep" for "Yes." The increase of Americanisms in English conversation will be accelerated by the fact that many Englishmen now are sending their sons to America as part of their education. A very successful English man of business told me lately that he had sent one of his boys from Oxford to Princeton for a year, and another boy, instead of going to a university, has been sent into an office in New York to make himself familiar with American ways of working. The father of these lads believes that it is essential to prosperity in England that more and more English boys should receive some such training. I know of a dozen boys whose fathers have behaved in that way.

THE majority of songs heard in musical comedies and revues in England are American in origin. A music-hall artist in a theatrical paper actually replied to an English composer of songs that it was useless to write about roses when people wanted to hear about peaches. In other words, the old-style English music-hall song is steadily being supplanted by the new style American song in which syncopation

(*Continued on page* 52)

**St. John Ervine is perhaps the best known internationally of the small group of distinguished London literary men now writing for the theatre. Born in Belfast, Ireland, Mr. Ervine took up his residence in England, with which country he has ever since been identified. He has written several plays, the best known in this country being *John Ferguson* and *Jane Clegg,* which were among the earliest and most successful productions of the Theatre Guild, and *Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary,* in which Mrs. Fiske appeared at the Belasco. Mr. Ervine is at present dramatic critic of the London *Observer.* Articles from Mr. Ervine's brilliant pen on timely theatrical topics will, from now on, be regular features of THEATRE MAGAZINE.**

*Florence Vandamm Studio*

## A NEW SISTER TEAM ON BROADWAY

*The Nashes—Florence as the wife with small-town tactics and Mary as the prima donna of Continental persuasiveness—join talents for the first time in their careers to battle over the eternal husband in Rachel Crothers' comedy, "A Lady's Virtue"*

*Florence Vandamm Studio*

## THE JOYOUSLY MUSICAL MARKS BROTHERS

***In "The Cocoanuts" at the Lyric, these expert purveyors of the eccentrically amusing fairly outdo themselves in a gorgeous and hilarious show***

# Mr. Hornblow Goes to the Play

***Watch the Expression on His Face***

TO-DAY that extraordinary art product of Russia, the Moscow Art Theatre, needs no introduction to American playgoers. Three years ago when these world-famous dramatic artists were first brought to this country by Morris Gest, aided and abetted by the millions of Broadway's Maecenas, Otto Kahn, there was little doubt as to New York's verdict. The incomparable Moscovians, headed by that dominating genius, Alexeieff Stanislavsky, came, were seen, conquered! Now we are welcoming the singing players of the same organization, known as the Moscow Art Theatre Musical Studio, who made their American début at the Jolson Theatre, December 14 in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata.*

This racy burlesque of feminine revolt in ancient Athens was not perhaps the happiest selection for the first appearance of the Russian singers. Gay as the ever-amusing old satire may be and full of lusty humor, of opportunity for any real acting or for singing, apart from the massed Greek choruses, there is, of course, none, and of the music by Glière barely a trace. Later bills, such as the Bizet opera, *Carmencita and the Soldier,* with its new libretto, and Lecocq's delightful *Fille de Mme. Angot* afford the visitors far greater scope.

As to the Russians' presentation of the Aristophanes classic, one can only say they do it superbly as we in America have never yet seen it done. The single stage picture, showing the slender white columns and stairways of the Acropolis, gracefully silhouetted against a vast expanse of sky of a gorgeous Mediterranean blue, is an unforgettable setting of colorful, classic beauty. A distinct achievement in the constructivist decoration is the manner in which the Russian designer, Rabinovitch, has handled the problem of space. The Doric colonnades of his Acropolis are suggested rather than built, the light structure being arranged in arcs with small platforms and stairways, on which the players take their place as called for by the action. The whole contrivance revolves on a pivot, so that different façades may be presented, and when rapidly turned by the mob, suggesting the opening and closing of the gates, serves to heighten the illusion of conflict. Here the women on sex strike, led by Lysistrata, admirably played by Olga Baklanova, hurl defiance at the officials sent to disperse them and take solemn vows, in the interest of the abolition of war, to abjure all calls of sex and deny themselves to husbands and lovers until they gain their end.

Of the production itself, the mass movements, the costuming, the acting, one can speak only in superlatives. The stage direction is masterly, the groupings remarkable. The spirit of Attic comedy is never allowed to flag for an instant. The grotesque make-up of the old soldiers, with their misshapen noses and comic antics, the *élan* and vigor of the women, the perfect rhythm and harmonious ensemble—it is all wonderfully done. Of anything like real acting there is, of course, none. For the most part it is all boisterous horse play. Highly diverting the fight between the women and the old men, resulting in the defeat of the graybeards and their being realistically spanked in approved nursery fashion. Later we have the suggestive comedy between Lysistrata and her husband, Kinesis, who, love hungry as effect of the sex strike, comes in desperation to the Acropolis to seek a renewal of wifely favors. How she avoids granting his now piteous, now furious appeals, the while making him think she is about to yield, results in scenes which might bring blushes to the cheek of modesty save for the fortunate fact that it is all in Russian. As it was, the pantomime was clear enough for everyone to understand and it was not only the men among the audience who laughed unrestrainedly.

### Plays You Ought to See

CRADLE SNATCHERS—Most amusing comedy farce, showing how three wives, annoyed by flirtatious husbands, adopt desperate remedies. Funniest play in town.

DEAREST ENEMY—Melodious and picturesque operetta of the American Revolution. Beautifully sung, staged and acted.

MOSCOW ART THEATRE MUSICAL STUDIO—Singing players of the world-famous Russian troupe. Incomparably superior to anything the past few seasons have produced.

NO, NO, NANETTE—Excellent entertainment with brisk comedy by Charles Winninger and some remarkable dancing by Louise Groody.

THE LAST OF MRS. CHEYNEY—Smart and entertaining crook play, with Ina Claire as a girl thief who wins her way in society.

THE VAGABOND KING—Singing version of the romantic drama, *If I Were King.* Beautifully sung and admirably acted.

THE VORTEX—Drama satirizing in merciless manner the degenerate life of London's idle rich. Splendid performance by Noel Coward, author of the play, supported by Lillian Braithwaite.

YOUNG WOODLEY—Charming comedy of English school life, with Glenn Hunter as a dreaming schoolboy, and a wonderful performance by Helen Gahagan as the master's wife.

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EUGENE O'NEILL having, through a long and laborious career, succeeded in proving that he is, of all realists, the most realistic, suddenly girds at his own reputation and vows solemnly in a program preface to *The Fountain* that this latest play of his is nothing of the sort. It isn't. It is called a "romance" and it takes eleven scenes to prove it.

Robert Edmond Jones, who designed the settings, being presumably a partner of Mr. O'Neill in this Greenwich Playhouse enterprise, it is a fair—though perhaps sordid—guess that he works at reduced rates for the firm. For eleven scenes is a large and expensive number of decorations. It is true that Mr. Jones represents a school of his own (it might be called scenic suggestion) which doesn't compel him to deliver any scene in its entirety, but enables him to paint about one-eighth of it and leave the remaining seven-eighths in the dark and to your imagination. If, for example, Mr. Jones were called upon to deliver a grocery store, he would light up a cheese on the counter, gleaming in the foreground, and drape the back with sable curtains.

Be this is it may, Mr. O'Neill has eleven scenes to roam in. He tells us he is dealing with Ponce de Leon in his search for the fabled Fountain of Youth. So he is. He is also dealing with a whole lot of other things—conquered Moors, American Indians in their earliest stage, monks and friars, Christopher Columbus, swashbucklers and Love's young dream in general. It would be unfair to Mr. O'Neill's fervid and fluent muse to assess it in a single phrase. To do his play justice, one would have to read it all through several times and weigh carefully how much of it was Shakespearian and how much farrago. But giving him the benefit of every doubt, after a single audition of the acted product, one is forced to the conclusion that though Mr. O'Neill may have had much to say, the purport, as filtered through a rather uneven performance, falls lamentably short of good drama. He seems to get drunk with his eleven scenes. He takes little theatrical dips into all eleven and tries to make up for lack of sustaining and coherent interest with episodic agitations. And always there is the faithful Jones at his back, helping him to reveal much and to conceal more. There is one scene—if memory serves, it was the ninth, or the tenth, or maybe the eleventh—in which Ponce de Leon has visions. This was an opportunity that neither Mr. O'Neill nor Mr. Jones could let go. Just half of these visions would have sufficed for any non-gluttonous auditor.

If Mr. O'Neill wished to prove that he could write a play for once that would not bring the blush of shame to the purest cheek, he has proved it. Two old ladies in the audience, who, from their conversation, had been lured down to the Village by the name of O'Neill, which they had associated with *Desire Under the Elms,* were visibly and audibly disappointed at being deprived of their vicarious thrills. But a dramatist can't please everybody.

Outside of Walter Huston as Ponce de Leon, who spoke his lines with full understanding, and Curtis Cooksey, who is always to be relied upon, and on this occasion contributed his nude beauty as well as his vibrant force to the American Indian, Nano, most of the cast was amateurish and not a few unintelligible.

HAVING followed its revivals of *Cæsar and Cleopatra* and *Arms and the Man* with *Androcles and the Lion* and *The Man of Destiny,* the Theatre Guild announces its intention to continue the production of Shaw's plays for the next three years to come.

A rather large order! Will the Guild subscribers have an appetite for so gargantuan a Shavian feast? The only justification any producing organization, dependent for its prosperity on public support, can have in devoting so much of its energy to a Shaw cycle is, first, that, for the moment, there is no fresher material available; second, that there is a big public clamoring for Shaw; third, that the Guild has proven its ability to do the plays better, or at least as well, as they have been done before.

That there is a demand for Shaw among the class from which the Guild recruits its audiences is no doubt true. Shaw, almost alone among his contemporaries, has not grown old. As essayist, wit, satirist, he can still make us laugh. As a writer for the theatre his claim to fame is less clear. More successful in his clowning than as a creative dramatist, most of his plays will not bear too close scrutiny. A man who holds opinions on all things, but convictions on none, he writes with his tongue in his cheek, in the spirit of buffoonery. His plays are largely nonsense, but they possess one thing that keeps us all young—the precious gift of humor. Moreover his ever-lashing tongue, his bitter cynicism appeal to the mood of this restless, jazz-loving, irreverent, unmoral age. That is why there is always an audience for Shaw. But the Shavians do insist on the plays being done well, and no one will pretend that the present Guild productions compare in merit with the high standard set a few years ago in this town by Forbes Robertson with *Cæsar and Cleopatra,* or by Granville Barker with *Androcles.*

The amazing weakness in the current bills is in the casting. The weird backgrounds of Miguel Covarrubias we can let pass with the pious hope that Shaw never sees them. But the casting? What possible fitness has Tom Powers to play the man of destiny? Mr. Powers is a conscientious, capable actor who long ago won his spurs on Broadway, but to select him to impersonate Napoleon was surely flying in the face of tradition, if not of Providence. He doesn't look or act like the little Corsican, nor does he create the slightest illusion of the great emperor by manner or make-up. A disastrous performance. Nor is Clare Eames much better suited to the part of the Lady. This actress is too fine an artist to be a downright failure in anything. As the Austrian woman who disguises herself as an officer to enter Bonaparte's lines, she has good moments, but that is not saying I have never seen the part far better done. In fact, the two principals—not to mention Edward Reese's comical lieutenant—may be said to have missed fire badly.

In *Androcles* Henry Travers contributed rich humor to the name part, and Edward G. Robinson made a surprisingly good Cæsar. But it was the lion—capitally done by Romney Brent—who carried off the honors. These were the only bright spots in a rather dreary evening. The Coliseum with the thickness of a sheet of cardboard, the seven hills of Rome, all on a waving canvas drop—these, with the capering lion and bedraggled martyrs singing *Onward Christian Soldier* as they pressed their way to the Arena, make the Guild *Androcles* seem half a Christmas pantomime and half an amazing burlesque.

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WITH her unerring instinct for the theatre Rachel Crothers has given us in her new play, *A Lady's Virtue,* presented at the Bjiou, a piece which, while melodramatic in spots and occasionally a little mawkish, provides on the whole an evening of diverting entertainment.

This writer has the faculty of gathering together types of humans whose different personalities and views are bound to clash. Thus we have interesting situations. This time she has taken a married woman, bored and disillusioned with her husband, a Mid-Victorian father and mother, and a biologist brother with very strong views on matters of sex. Into this domestic atmosphere, the playwright ushers a temperamental opera-singer, and her retinue of servants and satellites. The singer, who has led a rather free and merry life, imbues the already dissatisfied wife with a large supply of false philosophy. The result, the wife runs away to the apartment of a bachelor of whom she has become enamored, and the opera-singer grabs the husband, believing that she has at last stumbled over the big love of her life. The mystic possession which provides the play with its title, remains intact, for the philandering wife decides at the eleventh hour that the husband she so lightly tossed into the arms of the singer, is more desirable than the bachelor.

Mary and Florence Nash have the heavy rôles of the opera-singer and the wife. Both sisters overact. Florence Nash appears to have the mistaken idea that deep emotion is registered socially by staring eyes and a blank expression. As she is supposed to be stirred emotionally all through the three acts, her expressionless countenance becomes decidedly tiresome. By contrast, Robert Warwick's restraint, in the rôle of the husband, is exceedingly refreshing.

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TO those who do not demand substantial dramatic fare, that light and altogether inconsequential little farce at the Maxine Elliott, *Beware of Widows,* will prove satisfying. Owen Davis knows how to choose ingredients for his dramatic puddings. If in this case they do not make a thick batter, they, at least, are not unpalatable. Then there is Madge Kennedy, with her pretty face, her charming mannerisms, and her intelligent putting over of effective lines, to enhance the play. In the rôle of a scheming young widow, bent on blasting the romances of a former admirer, she is altogether appealing.

The three scenes take place on board a house-boat. The owner of the boat, his daughter, and his guests are all busy with scrambled love affairs, when they are not imbibing cocktails or preparing to have conferences with the little fishes. In this setting the loving and slightly malicious widow plays her cards, and fights a battle for her man.

This farce can safely be recommended for an evening of light entertainment, guaranteed not to ruffle or disturb the most emotional theatregoer. Further, it obviates the necessity for any concentrated thought. It is a tasty cream puff on the play menu.

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WE must have grown much wickeder since the earlier days of this century when Herr Ludwig Thoma, the Austrian dramatist, scandalized his countrymen by producing a play called *Moral* which exploited the highly salacious career of a lady of by no means uncertain virtue, and the fact that one of her patrons was no other than that sacrosanct personage, the Crown Prince, himself. This latter fact, though it was breathed with fear and trembling abroad, leaves an irreverent and democratic audience indifferent. It was to such an audience that an English version of this play, under the title of *Morals* (with the added S) was produced by the Actors' Society and launched at the Comedy Theatre on November 30.

Naughty as the play might once have been I hasten to say I was no longer shocked. Thanks to the advanced curriculum of Prof. Al Woods and other liberal theatrical educators, the designedly naughty material of the play did not appear half naughty enough. Thus do we become enlightened, tainted, and hardened! The plot, in a word, tells how the iridescent Dame is raided through the influence of the Vice Society. The police are warned not to push matters for the above-stated reasons of State, but the harm already done affects mainly the President of the Vice Society who, himself, is listed in the Lady's Red Book as one of her most frequent and captivating customers. The efforts made by this polygamic sinner to capture the Red Book before it becomes the property of the public in general and his wife, in particular, provides some of the main drolleries of the piece.

The play is really witty besides being satirically excoriating of Modern Reform, and if it had only arrived some years sooner might have created greater excitement. And even as it is, it will not fail to interest all who enjoy expert acting. Edward Nicander's performance of the morally obliquitous President was very fine. John Craig's interpretation of the preposterous dignity of a Police Assessor showed an ability to characterize, with which he has not hitherto been accredited. And the gentleman who played the legal adviser of the panic-stricken President (though his name is not easily extracted from the long list of insufficiently defined characters) deserves this anonymous mention as a tribute to his extremely fine diction. The flamboyant daughter of Aphrodite was gorgeously visualized and temperamentally executed by Marian Warring-Manley, whose one fault is that her rapid utterance at times lacked the clearness of her intent.

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THE piffle your "smart" Broadway audience will receive with rapture when the author happens to be the vogue and the featured player an old favorite almost passes belief. Noel Coward wrote *Easy Virtue,* in which Jane Cowl is appearing at the Empire, but for all there is to this inept comedy of English country life, it

Androcles, Christian martyr (*Henry Travers*), fleeing from pursuing Roman persecutors, halts to pick a thorn from the foot of the lion (*Romney Brent*) and thus makes a friend who, in the hour of need, becomes a friend indeed

In *Androcles and the Lion* the captain of the Centurions (*Tom Powers*) urges Lavinia (*Clare Eames*) to make the gesture of changing her religion so she may escape the horrible fate of being thrown to the lions

In *The Man of Destiny*, Napoleon (*Tom Powers*) realizes that the lady spy (*Clare Eames*) is tricking him, but she does it so charmingly that he is quite content to let her play her game

## THEATRE GUILD PRESENTS A DOUBLE SHAW BILL

*Comical martyrs, benevolent lion, indiscreet Napoleon and other oddities dished up with Shavian humor*

might just as well have been written by the iceman. Not a glimpse of humor, not a flash of wit in a dreary, talky, long drawn-out domestic squabble of dull, uninteresting people. It was perhaps hardly fair to expect in this play the same skill and sophistication shown in *The Vortex*. It is only charitable to believe it is one of the many Coward scripts that London managers rejected and which lay mouldering at the bottom of the young playwright's trunk until the success of his later plays automatically made all his manuscripts marketable. The present flop is only another example of how producers stupidly run a good thing to death.

The three acts take place in the sitting-room of Colonel Whittaker's country house. John, the son, has married secretly while abroad and is bringing his wife, Larita, home. His mother and sisters, puritanical, narrow-minded, naturally suspicious of any woman met in French watering-places, believe John has fallen into the hands of an adventuress and prepare a frigid welcome. Colonel Whittaker urges a more charitable attitude. John and his wife arrive. Larita instantly senses the family's hostility, refuses to truckle to conventionality and prejudice and starts a fight which ends with a complete rupture. It is interesting to note that the technique shown in *The Vortex* is identical with the method followed in this piece. Talk, talk, with no situation all through the first act and most of the second. Then, just before the end of the second, a sudden flare-up of human passions that brings down the curtain amid a burst of applause.

The part of Larita was not a happy choice for Miss Cowl. John is little more than a callow youth, and to see him married to a woman of mature years is unfortunate in that it at once furnishes justification for the attitude of the young husband's family, and thus to a considerable extent robs the heroine of sympathy. Miss Cowl, too, has a very faulty enunciation, which, as time passes, seems to become even more pronounced. She speaks as though something were in her mouth and is often quite inaudible. Otherwise she did bravely with an ungrateful part, defied her acidulous mother-in-law, denounced the sex complex of the mannish Marion, showed a quite inexplicable animosity against an unoffending little statuette of Venus de Milo, and, although the day was warm and sunny, insisted on wearing a huge fur coat for no apparent reason at all except to show it off to potential buyers among the audience.

Mr. Hobbes gave an unforgettable performance two seasons ago in *The Swan,* but as Colonel Whittaker he does not shine. This actor has one unfortunate mannerism, which, unless corrected, threatens to mar all his work. He smiles too much, apropos of nothing. It's the smile that wins, maybe, but too much of it is apt to degenerate into a nervous, unnatural grimace, which is neither helpful to the characterization nor agreeable to the audience. Joyce Carey as John's former sweetheart Sarah, gave the best performance of the evening. Sweet and womanly, she was the only really human character in the play.

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SAM FORREST, by his producing skill, has materially helped many a playwright in the proper presentation of his output, and to his own play, *Paid,* at the Booth, he has given careful, intelligent and thoughtful work to its best development and close attention to the details that make for an effective representation. And yet the play is not quite satisfactory. Mr. Forrest has a fine ethical theme which makes for superior dramatic situations, and in the last two acts there are splendid acting possibilities for the players and real thrills for those in front.

An inventor, in sore needs of funds, finds a package of money which a thief has thrown away. He makes no attempt to find the true owner, but uses it for his own work, which turns out fabulously successful. Then he tries to square his conscience by making his unknowing benefactor rich. There is constant suspense, which is finally relieved as the son of one and the daughter of the other wish to be married. There is nice ingenuity in the arrangement of a quartet of scenes that are supposed to happen simultaneously. These mechanical details are worked out with fine celerity.

It is a very superior characterization which Edward Ellis gives of the miserlike man who loses the money, but who, raised to affluence, refuses to forget his original plight, and comes hotfooted out for the most sweeping revenge. Carl Anthony, as the inventor, was soundly true, and his wife, largely responsible for his ethical decision, was played with dramatic strength of feeling by Gail Kane. A particularly admirable bit of a cranky director was contributed by Joseph Kennedy.

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ALTHOUGH comparisons may be odious and non-critical, they are certainly useful in establishing values. With a superior production of *The School for Scandal* firmly established at the Little Theatre, George C. Tyler brought his aggregation of players into town on a Sunday night and at the Knickerbocker, before an invited audience—mostly professionals—sought to demonstrate that he, too, could give an equally stimulating and artistic revival of Sheridan's masterpiece. On points, that is traditional respect and utility, taste in production and that invaluable artistic asset, balance, I have no hesitation in declaring that Mrs. Insull and her associates win by a large majority. *Mais revenons à* Mr. Tyler's *moutons.* They are largely English, but the honors of the evening certainly went to a trio of players long associated with the American drama: Henrietta Crosman's spirited and sustained rendering of the gossipy Mrs. Candour; Jefferson de Angelis' perfect interpretation of the exacting money lender Moses, and William Seymour's dignified expression of the human qualities of Rowley. These characterizations of value were followed close by the nice, unctuous charm displayed by Ben Field as Sir Oliver and the somewhat uneven quality of dash and impudence that Ian Hunter gave to the irresponsible but ingratiating Charles. His work in the screen scene was notable for his polite handling of the incident. Of course, there is no real reason why Sir Peter shouldn't be thin and dried up instead of big, burly and resonant. For physical reasons, O. P. Heggie, as the old bachelor who marries a young wife, was dry and crisply sentatious, but it does not make for good contrast. From a histrionic point of view James Dale acted admirably, but it was something new to see the specious Joseph as a very obviously calculating spider. Mary Howe was a most refined Maria, and May Collins as Lady Teazle suggested a metropolitan rather than suburban birth, translated by circumstances to a loftier environment. There are few masterpieces of a hundred years ago that do not benefit by condensation. The version acted was too long and, to save time, did not permit the players to phrase with the care and *nuance* that makes for the best interpretation of the wit and sparkle of the dialogue.

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JAMES FORBES, who wrote *Young Blood,* seen at the Ritz Theatre, did not have quite enough material for three acts. After some adroit writing, brilliantly interpreted during the first two acts of his play, his muse began to halt, and he was forced to evolve a rather lame and impotent third act.

The play purports to deal with the revolt of the younger generation against the indifference of parents. The two characters set in opposition to each other are the young college lad, aged twenty, and his rich and indulgent father —the former played by Eric Dressler, the latter by Norman Trevor. Both gave fine performances. There are two scenes in this play that might be called its "high lights." Both occur in the second act. In the first of these, the father, having in a fit of anger fiercely censured his boy for having been expelled from college and left him in a state of grief and humiliation, returns in a moment of contrition to forgive the erring youth and to assume some share of the blame by confessing that in spite of his previous financial liberality, he had taken but little interest in the progress of his son's studies. In this scene Mr. Trevor threw real pathos into his tones and moved his audience to great sympathy. But the father's contrition suddenly gave way to a violent note of anger and disgust when he found that the boy to whom he was speaking was lying in a drunken stupor. This came as an equal surprise, both to him and the audience and had tense dramatic value.

The second admirable scene—also in the second act—took place between the aforesaid youth and his sweetheart, skillfully played by Helen Hayes. No better mingling of comedy and sentiment in a love scene can be imagined. It is the overuse of the character played by Miss Hayes that causes the eventual feebleness of the third act. For in this act this young lady is called upon to do so much in setting matters right that the other characters become mere puppets—the father in particular, who up to then has made some effort to take command of the situation, completely obliterating himself in allowing the young man's sweetheart to take absolute control. While this gives Miss Hayes great opportunity, it also smacks so purely of theatrical device that it loses its reasonableness.

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THE little giant of the North must be smilin his grave, for every revival of Ibsen these days proves his worth in terms of no uncertain potentiality. The Stagers prospered with *Rosmersholm;* the Actors' Theatre packed its coffers to the bursting point with *The Wild*

(*Continued on page* 58)

*Photos White*

Act II, Scene I: The fascinating Mrs. Cheyney (*Ina Claire*) and the unsuspecting Lord Arthur (*Roland Young*) watch the comic bridge game of their fellow week-enders (*Lionel Pape, Helen Hayes* and *May Buckley*)

Act II, Scene II: Mrs. Cheyney creeps into the bedroom of her hostess and steals a priceless string of pearls

Act III: Charles, the master crook (*A. E. Matthews*) says good-bye to his comrade in larceny as he goes out of her life forever

Act III: Having admitted the theft of the pearls, Mrs. Cheyney disarms her hostess and guests with a hint that she has knowledge of a few closeted skeletons, whose bones she would reveal, if necessity demanded

## "THE LAST OF MRS. CHEYNEY": SMART CROOK PLAY AT THE FULTON

*Ina Claire and Roland Young sparkle in Frederick Lonsdale's beguiling English drawing-room comedy*

# Lehar Triumphs with Paganini Operetta

*Creator of "Merry Widow" Attains Supreme Artistic Heights With Opera on Great Wizard of the Violin*

By PAUL BECHERT

*Special Correspondent of "Theatre Magazine"*

*Vienna, Dec. 1, 1925.*

OF the triumvirate of Viennese operetta kings left by the late lamented death of Leo Fall—Franz Lehar, Oscar Straus and Emmerich Kalman—Lehar may claim the distinction of an innovator and creator of the species. It was his *Merry Widow* which placed Vienna on the operetta map again more than twenty years ago, and filled the gap left by the death of the great Johann Strauss. Oscar Straus has a more literary flavor in his pieces, and Kalman the bigger capacity for writing real "hits." But Lehar is neither too literary nor does he write for the man on the street. Rather it is he, and he alone, who sees his aim in lifting operetta into the nobler sphere of grand opera, not by outdoing his colleagues in the heroism of his plots—but by the employment of a musical idiom which by virtue of its melodics and orchestration rises far above the level of current comic opera. In his latest works we see him in quest of new ideas with the ardor of a real master. In his latest operetta it is the life of a great artist, Nicolo Paganini, the famous "wizard fiddler," that kindled his fancy and inspired him to write one of the finest operetta scores in existence.

THE AUTHORS AND SINGERS OF "PAGANINI"

Franz Lehar (*center*) with Emmy Kosary (*at his right*) and his cast. In the rear the librettists: Paul Knepler (*right*) and Béla Jenbach

BIOGRAPHICAL operetta has been a habit of operetta writers for the last few years. It is the outcome of the tremendous success of *Das Dreimäderlhaus,* better known in English-speaking countries as *Blossom Time,* which has but recently established the unprecedented record of the 1,000th performance in its home city Vienna. The recipe was simple enough: it seemed easy to place any famous composer on the stage as the hero of a more or less fictitious but highly "pathetic" love story and to surround the flimsy affair with music picked at random from the rich treasures of his own music. By this simple device Austria and Germany were during the last decade graced with a veritable flood of "biographical" operettas pretending in turn to treat of the lives of Schumann, Johann Strauss and even Anton Bruckner, and displaying sentimental episodes from their careers to the accompaniment of music concocted from their immortal works. In a similar way Joseph Haydn had been made the hero of an operetta compiled from his music as far back as 1823, and nine years later Mozart was placed on the stage by Albert Lortzing, the creator of German comic opera, not to speak of an attempt made in Germany in 1874 to profit by public affection for George Frederick Handel and to draw belated royalties from his beautiful music. But all such attempts of musical pickpockets happily failed, and *Blossom Time* survives as the one successful experiment in this direction.

And now comes Lehar with his latest operetta, *Paganini,* and adds another specimen to the long list of operetta biographies. Needless to say with an artist of Lehar's standing and taste, he does not content himself with concocting a potpourri of Paganini's own music, but relies solely upon his own musical invention and inspiration. It was always the romantic element rather than the comedy possibilities of comic opera which attracted Lehar's creative powers—and what other figure could have been more inviting to his imagination than the almost legendary and demoniac personality of Nicolo Paganini! The story of his very life sounds like a novel.

When the great wizard of the violin is born at Genoa, in 1784, an angel appears to his mother in her dreams—so she tells her son in a letter almost thirty years later—and promises her that her child would become "the world's greatest violinist." Under his father's severe, indeed cruel guidance, little Nicolo soon redeems the great prophecy. At the age of eight years he composes his first Sonata, and soon writes music which he finds "easier to compose than to execute"—a quality possessed by many a modern piece as well. At eleven he makes his first public appearance which marks the beginning of a meteoric career trimmed with many romances. He became not only the greatest virtuoso of his time, but also its greatest lover, gambler and adventurer. His temperamental disposition was proverbial and a source of continual grief for his managers and mistresses. Even during his lifetime he was made the hero of poems, novels and dramatic plays. The fascination of his violin playing must have been indescribable, and it took the genius of a Heinrich Heine, in his "Florentine Nights" to depict the frenzy, nay intoxication of Paganini's audiences, and the authority of a Franz Liszt to do justice to his unsurpassed playing. When he died from consumption, in 1845, at Nice, Paganini left a fortune of two millions of francs.

FROM the picturesque career of this great gypsy of the violin, Lehar's librettists have picked the rather colorless episode at Lucca where Paganini sojourned from 1805 to 1808 as "court music director." If we are to believe Messrs. Knepler and Jenbach, his functions there were rather manifold but chiefly those of a love-maker to Her Highness Anna Maria Elisa, Princess of Lucca and sister to none other than Emperor Napoleon. Indeed the figure of this great conqueror looms large upon the horizon of the piece, although he himself never enters the stage.

The librettists have played havoc with history—which it is probably the privilege of librettists to do. The curtain rises upon a village scene, with the populace listening attentively to a violin solo played, behind stage, by the great fiddler. Soon he himself appears and, as is customary with operetta tenors, at once falls in love with the beautiful princess, who is, however, jealously watched by her husband, who is in turn himself madly in love with the prima-donna

(*Continued on page* 58)

Florence Vandamm Studio

MARIAN WARREN-MANLEY AND EDWARD NICANDER IN "MORALS"

*As Madame De Hauteveille, a "shameless, shameful lady" of the late nineties, this actress, new to Broadway, made a sensational début, and as the morally obliquitous President of the Vice Society, Edward Nicander maintained his reputation as one of our most amusing farceurs*

# The Face at the Box-Office Window

*Urbane Knights of the Pasteboards Whose Job It Is to Placate Grouchy Amusement Seekers*

By ADA PATTERSON

WM. F. MUENSTER
Former box-office man. Now manager of the Fulton Theatre

OGRES or seraphim? Fiends or celestial beings? To which class belongs the face that we see at the box-office window?

There are two hundred treasurers selling tickets in the lobbies of the New York theatres and they are paid from $40 to $100 a week.

Friends or angels? Which? They are neither, according to "Bobby" (Robert) C. Stevenson, Jr., the boy treasurer of the Little Theatre.

"The box-office is the heart of the theatre," said Bobby, "and the man at the box-office window is its pulse."

Bright Bobby! When he is a little older in service—he must have had a full four years at the window—they intend to let him join the Treasurers' Club of America, of which his father, Robbert L. Stevenson, of the Morosco, has long been a member. Bobby, one might say, with a shade of the *raconteur's* license, was born in the box-office. For his father is beginning to count his twenty-fifth year in the handling of pasteboards of admission and the exercise of enormous self-restraint.

DAVID MAYER, whose face we see at the Plymouth before we see the star's, is one of the veterans of the business of ticket-selling.

"I began at the window of the Metropolitan Opera House," he said, "the old opera house, that was burned down, on the site of the present one. It was in 1891. I was there under Grau's management. When he moved across the street to the Knickerbocker, I went too. I used to sell tickets at the Madison Square Garden. Been in the business thirty-four years. I'm a life member of the Treasurers' Club. You see no children's names in that list. You must have been at a box-office window for twenty-five years, or associated with the theatre for twenty-five years, before you become a life member. People are all right if you treat them right. The box-office man's motto should be, 'The customer is always right.'"

Mr. Mayer has a rosy face, framed in snowy hair that curls as softly as a débutante's. The rosiness of his face is marred by no single wrinkle. The box-office did not find him a "grouch." It will not leave him one.

When the Chanin Brothers wanted a treasurer for their sumptuous new theatre, the Biltmore, they asked for the man best endowed of the two hundred treasurers for making friends for the virgin playhouse.

"Get Smiling Willie," they heard. They received the reply so often, and from so many persons, that they sent for him. "Smiling Willie" declined the offer. "It's nice of you to want me," he said with his warm, white smile, "but I'd rather not come. Thank you just the same."

RALPH W. LONG
Now general manager of the Shubert Theatre Corporation

(*Center, top*)
JED F. SHAW
General manager for Winthrop Ames

GEO. J. APPLETON
Now manager of the Maxine Elliott Theatre

HARRY B. NELMES
President of the Treasurers' Club of America and presiding genius in the Belmont Theatre box-office

MIKE DONOVAN
Treasurer Cosmopolitan Theatre

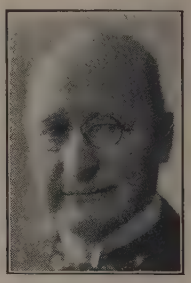
"You'll at least tell us why?" asked one of the phenomenal brothers, who in their mid-forties are multimillionaires.

"Certainly, Mr. Chanin. You'll want a Tuxedo boy at this theatre, and I hate to wear a Tuxedo. I was thinking of Dan Carter. Maybe you haven't heard of Dan. Fine young chap. He came here from Chicago. He got a job at the Century Theatre. He had to wear a Tuxedo at the Century. The draught struck him. Eleven days after he took the job he was down with pneumonia. He died."

"And you don't want to die. Right, Willie. But come and look at our box-office. You'll find it has no draughts."

William A. Connor, after surveying the commodious, draughtless box-office of the Biltmore, accepted the Chanin Brothers' offer. He sold the first ticket for the opening of the house of crimson and silver.

"Go to the Fulton and sit on a stool in the box-office between two and half past. Watch the functioning of the highest-paid man in the business," said a manager.



LYLE D. ANDREWS
Former box-office man. Now owner of the Vanderbilt Theatre

I PERCHED on a stool and watched James N. Vincent perform his duties. Mr. Vincent, tall, svelte and supple as a dancing master, groomed like a Fifth Avenue beau, sold tickets for a matinée of *The Last of Mrs. Cheney* with the machine-like expertness of a Robot in the Capek drama of soulless efficiency, *R. U. R.*

"Five tickets here in the name of White?" "Sorry. There are not five tickets here in the name of White," he crooned as gently as though singing a lullaby. "Nothing left but tickets in the balcony. One dollar ten cents. How many, please? Two weeks from Thursday can give you eighth row back in the orchestra. Sorry that there is nothing nearer. Oh, the five tickets were left in the name of Lee, not White. Here they are."

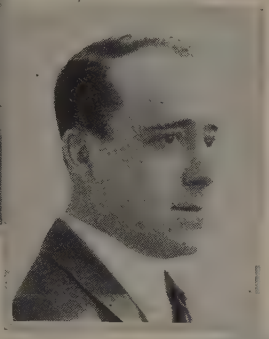
"I can't see a darned thing in the chair you sold me," said a tearful voice of one unseen by me.

"I'm very sorry, madame. We have only seats in the balcony left. Shall I refund your money? Not at all, madame." The balcony rack was fast being emptied of its blue tickets. The pleasant chant went on. It soothed me into

(*Cont'd on page* 60)

ROBERT C. STEVENSON
Treasurer of the Little Theatre

DAVID MAYER
*Plymouth Theatre*



WILLIAM G. NORTON
*Music Box Theatre*

JAMES F. McENTEE
*Daly's Theatre*

JAMES N. VINCENT
*Fulton Theatre*

ALLAN S. SCHNEBBE
*Hudson Theatre*

WILLIAM A. CONNOR
*New Biltmore Theatre*

EARL R. LEWIS
*Metropolitan Opera House*

LEONARD E. BERGMAN
*New Amsterdam Theatre*

LEON SPACHNER
*Vanderbilt Theatre*

ROBERT McCALL
*Belasco Theatre*

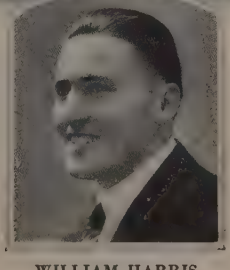
LOUIS OLMS
*Henry Miller Theatre*

CLARENCE D. JACOBSON
*Forty-eighth Street Theatre*

ARTHUR NICOLL
*Broadhurst Theatre*

GEORGE MORLEY
*Apollo Theatre*

SOL DE VRIES
*Winter Garden*



WILLIAM HARRIS
*Empire Theatre*

## WHAT HAVE YOU GOT FOR TO-NIGHT?

*Some of New York's two hundred box-office treasurers, whose job is to keep smiling no matter how many cranks at the window*

# Boston Honors Its Theatre

*Official Recognition Accorded for First Time in History and New Playhouse Declared Tax Exempt*

By STEWART BEACH

NO astute analysis of theatrical trends is necessary to observe the increasing interest which the last decade has witnessed in the revival of repertory. A quarter century ago, when the repertory or stock company, as such, practically disappeared from the American stage, few voices were raised to mourn its passing. Now a generation, remembering only by tradition the famous stock companies of the seventies, eighties and nineties of the past century, has here and there set about to bring back this once honored institution. Boston, with all its tradition of culture and educational attainment, has been among the first to recognize the wisdom of the movement. For the past eight years the city has supported an excellent group of players under the management of Henry Jewett; now it is to try its hand at caring for two enterprises, differing slightly in organization, yet each striving to present plays which fill the double theatrical ideal of wide appeal and wholesome entertainment.

THE REALIZATION OF A TEN-YEARS' DREAM

**Exterior of the Repertory Theatre of Boston, ground for which, on Huntington Avenue, was broken November 11, 1924, and officially opened, under the management of Mr. Henry Jewett, on Armistice Day eve, 1925, with a production of Sheridan's comedy, *The Rivals***

NO worldly first-nighter can fail to grasp the prophetic implication of the gesture which opened the doors of the Repertory Theatre of Boston on Armistice Day eve, 1925. With that occasion, Boston cast off any vestigial Puritan frowns at "actor folk," accepted the stage as a part of its community life, and in proof of its sincerity, declared the Repertory Theatre to be tax-exempt, both from municipal and State levies. Thus, for the first time in this country's history, has a theatre built by private subscription been recognized as of sufficient educational importance to command the respect accorded to libraries, museums, schools and churches. Much was made of this official recognition upon the opening night, both by the Governor of Massachusetts and by an envoy of Boston's Mayor. Both dignitaries recalled that Boston had been the first municipality in the country to establish a free public library; both of them prophesied that Boston's present establishment had created a precedent which could not fail to find its echo in other localities.

The Repertory Theatre of Boston is the realization of a dream nearly a decade old. Henry Jewett, an Australian by birth and the professional head of the permanent company, has been working since 1916 toward the ideal which has its realization in the present structure. In that year he took over a small house, renamed it the Copley Theatre, and there, until 1922, when the company moved into a larger theatre under the same name, his players continued to produce a creditable list of plays. Until the beginning of the Fall season of 1924 the Jewett Players held their lease of the Copley Theatre. At that time the manager ceased active play production to devote his energies to directing the construction of the present playhouse, which had been made possible through gifts and private subscriptions to an issue of bonds to take care of construction costs. On November 11, 1924, ground was broken on the Huntington Avenue site, facing Symphony Hall and the Boston Opera House; on the eve of that ceremony's anniversary the new enterprise was officially launched with a revival of Sheridan's comedy, *The Rivals*.

The actual inception of the present theatre dates back to 1920, when the Jewett Repertory Theatre Fund was incorporated under an Act which provides for organizations of charitable, educational and other purposes. By the provisions of the Act, the theatre may not be operated for private profit, but must be administered by its board of trustees in the interest of the public. There are no stockholders, and profits from play production and from the rental of the building's smaller auditorium, Repertory Hall, will be turned to retirement of outstanding obligations and increase in producing facilities.

The structure occupies 17,500 feet of ground, with a frontage of 100 feet on Huntington Avenue. J. Williams Beal Sons, the architects, have fittingly visualized a building which reflects throughout the Georgian period of English renaissance. The theatre is set back fifteen feet from the sidewalk, with a stone terrace running its full length, a feature which lends an air of firmness to the base and serves to set off the upper portion to the fullest extent. The lower story is of rusticated limestone and the body of the façade is of dark, red-toned, antique, water-struck brick, with fluted pilasters, carved ornaments, cornice and balustrade of limestone. On the right, the main entrance takes the form of a segmental bay, designed in iron and struck out forcefully from the background by its whiteness. On the opposite side, a similar bay encloses windows which afford light to the tea-room, which occupies one end of the theatre.

Adjoining the theatre entrance is a closed vestibule, elaborated with wrought iron, which gives entrance to the club portion of the building at the rear of the theatre proper. Here reception, rest and committee rooms are provided for members, and this floor also houses the private and general offices, together with a rehearsal room, green-room and dressing-rooms. On the floor above is situated Repertory Hall, an auditorium seating 450, which, together with its finely equipped serving-room, is available for concerts, lectures, recitals, dances, luncheons and banquets. An experimental workshop occupies the basement. No account of this sort should omit mention of the stage and its lighting facilities, which have been arranged in accordance with the most modern principles as developed by The Theatre Guild of New York, and are said to be as fine as any in the country.

THUS is the Repertory Theatre of Boston prepared to make its bid for popularity and permanence. But Mr. Jewett and his board of trustees properly realize

(*Continued on page* 54)

*Photo White*

FRANCIS WILSON AS RIP VAN WINKLE

*This favorite comedian is now appearing in the rôle of the rogue of the Hudson immortalized by the late Joseph Jefferson. What more fitting than that this famous old play and veteran actor should be one of the first attractions of the newly inaugurated Repertory Theatre of Boston*

Young Woodley (*Glenn Hunter*) listens with mingled amazement and disgust to his classmates' discussion of morals

# Young Woodley

## A Play in Three Acts by John Van Druten

*THE critics have been unanimous in their praise of this comedy-drama by a young English dramatist, and the portrayal of its leading rôle by a young American actor, Glenn Hunter, late of "Merton of the Movies" fame. As professor in a Welsh University, the author, John Van Druten, is intimately acquainted with the locale and characters of his play, some of the latter being undoubtedly biographical. Because of the frankness of dialogue and situation the production was forbidden in England by the British censor. The American presentation, whether deleted or not, has escaped all criticism on this score. Reproduced by arrangement with the producer, George C. Tyler.*

THE CAST

(As produced at the Belmont Theatre)

| | |
|---|---|
| Cope | George Walcott |
| Vining | Geoffrey John Harwood |
| Ainger | Edward Crandall |
| Milner | John Gerard |
| Woodley | Glenn Hunter |
| Laura Simmons | Helen Gahagan |
| Simmons | Herbert Bunston |
| Parlor Maid | Esther Bell |
| Mr. Woodley | Grant Stewart |

THE first act takes place in the Prefect's Room in the Tree House, Mallowhurst, about five o'clock on a May afternoon. Cope, a small fag of about fourteen, is clearing away the tea things. He is interrupted in his task by the entrance of Ainger, Vining and Milner. Ainger is nearing nineteen, good-looking and athletic; Vining is rather coarse and too well dressed. Milner seems a pleasant and agreeable chap of no decided personality.

VINING: I hope you were duly impressed with the head's awful words this morning in Assembly, Cope? I trust you will profit by them and always keep yourself pure in thought, word and deed.

COPE: I didn't understand what he was talking about. . . . What has Riley done?

VINING: Little boys mustn't ask questions.

MILNER: That's something you'll understand when you're older, Cope.

COPE: West said he knew, but he wouldn't tell me. He told me to ask Simmons (*A loud guffaw from all three.*)

VINING: That's right, Cope, you ask Simmons, Mrs. Simmy. . . . Why don't you ask her. . . . I'm sure she'd tell you.

AINGER: Shut up, Vining. . . . You cut along to Task Book, Cope, and tell Plunkett I kept you.

The young student, Cope, leaves the room and the others turn to discussing the incident which has resulted in Riley's expulsion. Simmons the housemaster has apparently made the episode the basis of a stiff lecture.

VINING: What a damned fool game that pi-jaw was he gave us this afternoon. We, as Prefects, responsible for the moral tone of the house. Well, Ainger, you're house captain, will you organize the force for the protection of public morals?

AINGER: If you were to take your position as Prefect a little more seriously, Vining, it wouldn't do you any harm.

VINING: Oh, Listen to the bloke . . . getting all official. By the way, where's young Woodley. What's he got to say about it all. You know, I think that kid's still pretty innocent about most things; although he pretends not to be. (*Roger Woodley comes in. He is a shy, fair boy of between seventeen and eighteen*) Hello, young passion flower, we were just talking about you.

WOODLEY: Oh?

AINGER: What's up?

WOODLEY: Nothing. Simmy, that's all. He seems to disapprove of me generally. My writings again. That poem in the Mag. unhealthy. Why do I waste my time scribbling when I ought to be garnering the precious hours of youth to cultivate my mind. That sort of thing.

VINING: A little affair like this of Riley's is likely to start him off for a whole term.

WOODLEY: Simmy's purity campaign makes me vomit. Not that I hold any brief for Riley, whatever he may have done . . . dirty little beast that he is.

It being evident that young Woodley is rather vague as to Riley's offense, Vining slyly enlightens him. A housemaid was apparently indiscreet with her favors, and young Mr. Riley was to suffer for accepting them.

WOODLEY: You can't get away from human nature. That's all Simmy's purity campaign means. Suppress your natural instincts. Huh! And Simmy is a nice one to talk anyway.

MILNER: What do you mean? Simmy's married.

VINING: I know he is. Jolly pretty woman she is too. A damned sight too good for old Simmy. But he's only been married two years and I was here before that . . . so were you, Milner. What about that parlor-maid of theirs. Nice piece. I'll bet she could tell a thing or two. High jinks she and Simmy used to have I'll warrant.

AINGER: Oh, shut up, Vining. You make me sick.

At length Woodley and Ainger are left alone in the room. The former rather diffidently leads up to a discussion of Vining's philosophy and escapades.

White

*Helen Hayes, having divested herself of the gay trappings of a junior Cleopatra, is back as the noble-hearted, slangy and clever member of America's younger set in James Forbes' new comedy "Young Blood"*

WOODLEY: These shop-girls . . . does he . . . really?

AINGER: I believe so.

WOODLEY: But you don't approve of it?

AINGER: I damn well don't. All the same there is something in what he says. We are under a system here that treats us as not being mature until we leave, that is, when we are eighteen or nineteen. Nature matures us at fourteen. What about it?

WOODLEY: Well, I think it's beastly. Ainger, have you ever . . . ?

AINGER: No . . . but . . . well . . .

WOODLEY: Have you ever been in love—properly, I mean?

AINGER: Never.

WOODLEY: You don't believe in it?

AINGER: I never said so.

WOODLEY: Vining doesn't. He couldn't or he wouldn't go on as he does.

AINGER: The two things aren't the same, you know.

WOODLEY: I wish I could get them straightened out. I suppose I am different from other fellows. You won't laugh at me? Well, one night in town last holidays I met Harpath . . . you remember, left last year? We went to a place down Tottenham Court Road. A dancing place, the Siren it was called. There were a lot of beastly looking men, awful swine, and . . . and . . . there were a lot of women there . . . you know, professionals, and I felt such a damned fool sitting there doing nothing. I asked one of them to dance. It was awful. I didn't know what to say to her and she made me feel sick. You know painted up to the eyes and awfully cheap scent, and I felt quite—well—frightened. I suppose I could have gone home with her if I'd liked. I believe Harpath did with one of them . . . anyway I lost him.

AINGER: Well, as long as you didn't go, I shouldn't worry about it.

WOODLEY: Then there was a girl I met at home at a dance last year. Awfully pretty. I danced with her twice and we were sitting out together and I wanted to kiss her frightfully; but I simply couldn't. I didn't know how to go about it. I just sat there saying nothing like a damned fool, till the next dance began. Bloody silly, isn't it. Then I go to writing poetry that Vining and his sort make fun of where I imagine myself no end of a dog.

Vining attempts some consoling theories, but young Woodley persists in outlining his point.

WOODLEY: But what I feel is, all this sort of thing . . . shop-girls and housemaids. . . . I simply couldn't do it. It would make me feel sick. And then you meet someone you like, someone of your own class . . . and the thing's impossible. I can't think of them that way. I can't imagine them letting me. It's all wrong somehow. I suppose when people are really in love. . . . I don't know, I don't understand that either. I don't see how it all squares out.

The discussion is interrupted by the entrance of Laura Simmons, a pretty woman of twenty-eight, rather fragile, shy and retiring. She has a sweet voice and a slight air of mystery about her. The two youths are somewhat embarrassed by the unexpected visit of their housemaster's wife. It develops that she has come to ask if, as Prefects, they would see that the younger boys did not trample the flower beds in the back yard of the Tree House. A pleasant conversation ensues, during which Ainger is called out and young Woodley and Laura Simmons are left alone.

LAURA: I've read your verses in the Magazine. Perhaps you would let me see some others, some day?

WOODLEY: Rather. Only . . . that is . . .

LAURA: I won't show them to my husband, if that's what you're afraid of. I promise. But I'd like to see them.

Woodley takes a roll of manuscript from his locked desk and hands it to her. The talk rambles on until presently Mrs. Simmons is diverted by a class photograph hanging on the wall.

LAURA: This was last year's class, wasn't it? Don't you feel a terribly different person now. Much more grown up. More than a year?

WOODLEY: I feel an awful baby still.

*White*

"YOUNG WOODLEY." ACT III

**Laura (Helen Gahagan) uses all the tenderness and pity of her womanhood to restore Woodley's lost illusions**

LAURA: You're keen on games, aren't you. I remember last year's sports. That was one school function that I did attend. I was awfully shy about going. But I enjoyed it.

WOODLEY: Shy? Why?

LAURA: Yes, why not? I'm terribly shy.

WOODLEY: So am I.

LAURA: I know. (*picks up book from table*) What's this, Swinburne? You like Swinburne?

WOODLEY: Yes, awfully.

LAURA: (*opens book and reads softly*):

"Eyes coloured like a water-flower,
And deeper than the green-sea's glass;
Eyes that remember one sweet hour—
In vain we swore it should not pass;
In vain, alas!"

WOODLEY: How beautifully you read it.

The tête-à-tête is disturbed by a knock at the door and Mr. Simmons comes in. He is a tall, lean, dried-up man of nearly fifty who seems slightly surprised at his wife's presence. His manner toward Woodley is rather hostile, his voice tinged with a subtle sarcasm.

SIMMONS: A little more time on the Binomial Theorem wouldn't exactly do you any harm, Woodley. Not quite so enthralling as Mr. Swinburne's lilies and languors perhaps, but a good deal healthier, I can assure you. You'll tell Ainger I want to see him?

LAURA (*takes Woodley's MSS. from chair*): Oh, I'm forgetting these.

SIMMONS: What have you got there?

LAURA: Only some recipes Mrs. Ratcliffe lent me. Good-bye.

She goes out with Simmons. Woodley stays where he is, thinking. He picks up Swinburne, opens and reads gently aloud.

"Eyes coloured like a water-flower,
And deeper than the green-sea's glass. . . ."

His reverie is broken by the appearance of Vining.

VINING: Hello, all alone. Mrs. Simmy's been here, hasn't she. What did she want?

WOODLEY: Oh, nothing. Wanted to speak to Ainger about the kids in her back garden or something.

VINING: Pretty little thing. Hot stuff too, I should think. That quiet dark kind always are. Old Simmy's a lucky fellow. Can't say I'd care to be mauled by Simmy if I was a girl though. Has she got a crush on Ainger do you think, coming in here after him like that. Ainger's a good-looking chap, bit of a change after Simmy. Did you retire tactfully and leave them alone? (*Woodley suddenly gets up and leaves the room, slamming the door behind him.*) Here, what's up? Now . . . what the . . .

* * * * * * * *

THE second act takes place in Laura Simmons's drawing-room, three weeks later, about four in the afternoon. Mr. Simmons is deploring the restless spirit that is abroad in the school, as exemplified in the moral fracture of young Riley. Laura takes the side of the boys, sympathizing with their immaturity, their natural impulses and awakened desires which lead to bad ends simply because they lack the companionship of older men and women at this most crucial time in their lives. She reproaches her husband and the other head masters for being too pedagogic in their attitude.

LAURA: Frank, why can't you behave normally and unaffectedly towards them? Why carry the classroom attitude into your ordinary existence. Even in the holidays I have noticed it. Among other people; that domineering, self-conscious attitude of the pedagogue that hangs around you like a halo. . . . A little common humanity is all these boys want.

SIMMONS: Are you proposing to play Blind-Man's-Buff with them?

LAURA: I am sorry. I was a fool to talk to you, to expect you to understand. God, if I had known it would be like this. . . .

SIMMONS: What then?

LAURA: I would never have come here—never have married you.

SIMMONS: If you feel that way, why did you marry me?

LAURA: Because I had not seen you at it. Because I thought you were a man and not a mass of prejudice. Oh, for God's sake leave me alone.

Simmons leaves for the cricket match. He has been gone but a moment when young Woodley is announced. Laura has the maid serve tea and asks why Ainger didn't come.

WOODLEY: He's awfully sorry. He sent a note. (*feels in pocket and hands her letter*) He had to play in the match at the last minute. Townley has sprained his ankle.

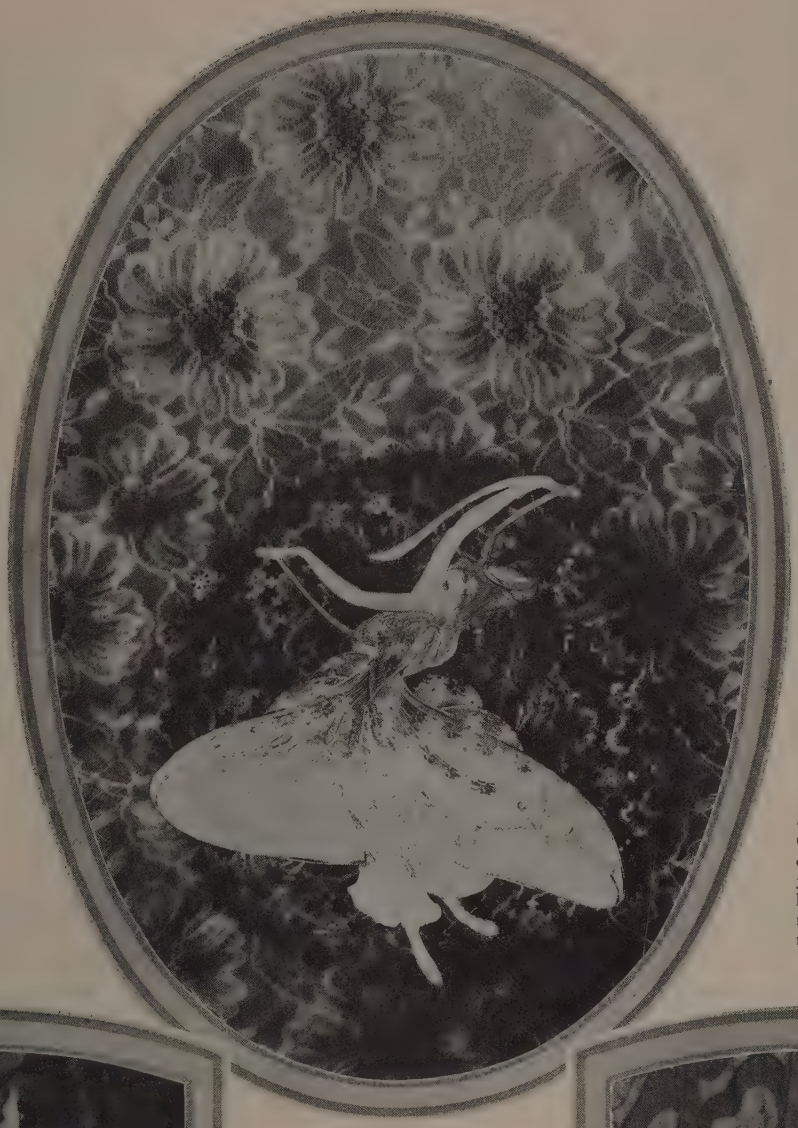
LAURA: Wouldn't you rather be watching the match since your friend is playing?

WOODLEY: No, I can see him play any time. Has your . . . Mr. Simmons gone to the match?

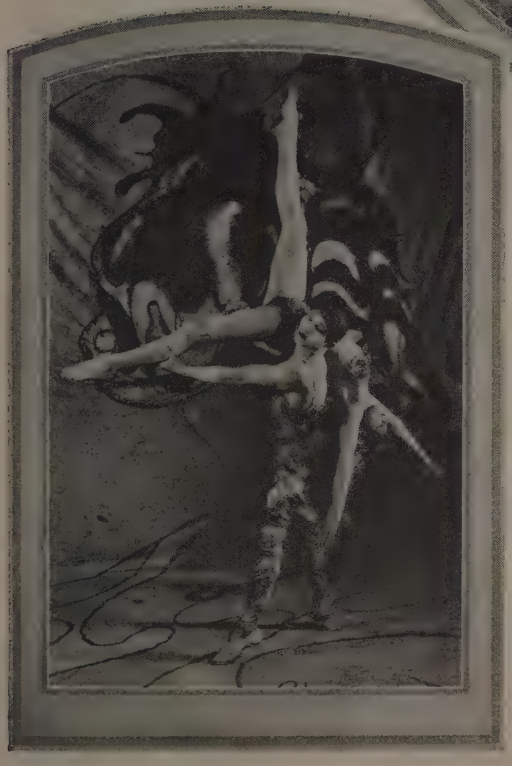
LAURA: Yes, my . . . Mr. Simmons has. I ought to have thought of the match when I asked you yesterday.

(*Continued on page* 50)

M. Chenko and Mlle. Alexa, a team of daring European ultra-modernists, shortly to make their first bow on Broadway, bring with them from Old World capitals exotic ballets of unparalleled splendor, together with new schemes of acrobatic dancing, enhanced by still rarer novelties of both costumes and settings, the whole woven into a web of entrancing fairy-tales. The scenic effects, surpassing in beauty and riot of gorgeous color anything yet attempted, are all by M. Chenko's own hand. Painter, sculptor, architect, dancer, he is an artist of amazing versatility. Born thirty years ago in Prague of simple parentage, he first made his début as a dancer-producer in Vienna, where his dancing and pantomime, inspired by the original Diaghileff ballets, met with instant success. This appearance was followed by triumphs in Budapest, Paris, Berlin and London. Mlle. Alexa, the dancer's wife in private life, a Viennese of blonde and slender type, lends herself most successfully to her partner's exotic and original technique.



One of the many elaborate stage designs of M. Chenko's ballet, designed and projected by colored lights. This technique is a new movement in stagecraft



A caressing, sweeping pose to the Dragon God in Mlle. Alexa's "Dragon Dance"

M. Chenko and Mlle. Alexa in an adagio pose, executed before an exotic grotesque setting in one of their late creations

## NEW EUROPEAN BALLET TO DAZZLE BROADWAY

*Russian dancers bring novel effects to New York revues*

# Mirrors of Stageland

*Intimate Glimpses Into the Character and Personality of Broadway's Famous Figures*

By THE LADY WITH THE LORGNETTE

LYNN FONTANNE

HEAR that laugh? It is the most distinctive laugh in the theatre world.

It is Lynn Fontanne's.

I have never heard it on the stage. The laugh you have just heard is not her acting laugh. It is hers. It is she.

The first time I heard Lynn laugh I was startled. It was such a different laugh. It seemed ill placed. It was five minutes before the curtain rang up on an opening. It fell upon a soft, low-toned murmur. It seemed to fill the theatre. Women with sleek marcel waves and bare backs showing above colored velvet gowns turned to stare. They saw her snowy teeth flashing, her eyes gleaming with fun. The tall, distinguished-looking man who sat beside her smiled his tolerance of the clear, carrying cachination. A woman in a cloth-of-silver evening cloak drew up her chinchilla collar. Her manner held a shade of self-consciousness. She had told the story that caused the laugh.

But Lynn laughed on and on. The laugh rippled around the theatre in musical waves. It was frank laughter, unafraid. She was the only one in the smart first-night audience who was not conscious of its uniqueness.

The woman in the silver-cloth evening cloak was a friend of mine. I asked her to tell me what stirred the unique Fontanne laughter. She told me it was her use of the word "reticent." Yes, she had been reciting scandal. She hadn't intended to "get Lynn going." But it would be as cruel to stop her laughter as it would to interrupt a bird's song.

If Lynn Fontanne would turn that deep, natural laughter of hers into the stage pasture it would be a high-kicking, attention-challenging colt. It would guarantee comedy in the dullest situation. It would save a tottering play. It would be remembered and described by the playgoers of the next generation as was Maude Adams' girlish giggle in *Butterflies*.

If I had to choose the most natural woman on the stage, without a moment's hesitation I would select Lynn Fontanne. Not the most natural actress, mind you. For hers is a studied method. It is a polished art. I should like to see her in crude, spontaneous comedy, playing a "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," who had not sinned and did not intend to sin. With mincing ladies we have her art. With the buoyant, untarnished field Tesses we would have her nature.

She loves the open country. She gambols in farm life. It was on a visit to the family of her fellow player, Alfred Lunt—she calls him "Bill"—in Michigan, that the pair of Europe-trained players discovered their common ground of simplicity and fell in love.

That's the foundation of Lynn. The fundamentals of her. Upon the foundation towers a structure of sophistication high as the Woolworth building. She is London trained and farm loving.

When her husband is doing a picture and must rise betimes, which is six, daylight savings, and the cook scorns to rise before the sun to boil his eggs and brew his coffee and toast his thin slices of bread, his wife without a yawn performs the cook's duty. Then she kisses her lord and waves an unstained hand to him from between the curtains and goes back to bed.

A domestic dweller in higher Bohemia.

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OTIS SKINNER

DO you know that Otis Skinner scrambled a hornet's nest at a minister's meeting in New York? Poor gentlemen of the cloth! And on one of the hottest days in Summer, too. Then he sat back and laughed. It was just what you would expect of a man with his eyes.

Ever notice his eyes? Must have, unless years of playgoing have dropped a veil over your own. They are the most challenging items in his physical equipment. Dark and extraordinarily alive and as full of jibes as a porcupine's hide of quills. He laughs at the world. Tolerantly, friendly enough. But he sees humanity to its marrow, and what he sees stirs his derisive mirth.

It is easy to imagine what took place in his agile mind after he received the invitation to address the ministers. "I'll stir them up. Make an omelette of 'em." He accepted the invitation and mingled suavely with the preachers. Then he mounted the rostrum and said that "the church is jealous of the stage." One of the preachers said in preacherly language, "Tain't so." Otis Skinner was silent. But his eyes laughed.

He's a minister's bad boy himself. His father was a Universalist preacher in Hartford, Conn. Thought his son would be too, but his son said, "No, no, papa," and got himself a job as an insurance clerk. Then went on the stage. But the family has forgiven him. So has the church. He has a large and loyal following in clerical circles. Particularly in Brooklyn.

Had Mr. Skinner joined the light-fingered gentry, his eyes would have laughed him out of court. They would have gleamed and twinkled at the judge and his honor would have relented. All the world loves a twinkling eye. His eyes "get over" when he plays. Particularly when he is playing comedy. To them were due half of his success in *The Honor of the Family*.

It is a delight to meet him in drawing-rooms. If he more enjoyed them, John Drew would have a rival in society. And Sidney Blackmer would have to reassemble and renew the pledges of his loyal dames of the drawing rooms. But Otis Skinner only smiles tolerantly upon social assemblages.

A wanderer he is. He played himself in *The Harvester*. He, like the vagabond of that drama, hears the call of the moon and the sea and far fields and is gone. He turns the key in the door of the Skinner home at Bryn Mawr. The home that is close to the campus of Bryn Mawr College, in which he is popular. The click of the key is the music of the spheres to him, for it heralds long Summer wanderings with Mrs. Skinner and Cornelia in the byways of Europe. He abjures its highways.

Yet Otis Skinner has his serious side. He stands for scholarliness, for the best of the traditions more than mirth. He was chosen, you know, to make an address at the unveiling of Charlotte Cushman's statue in the "Hall of Fame."

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ROBERT MILTON

THE man with the pale face and the pale crown, surrounded by an aureole of framelike hair, is Robert Milton.

He is a Russian with a name so long and difficult that he does not impose upon his friends nor his associates in art the task of pronouncing it. He is too busy to give class instruction in spelling it. So he amputates the long patronym and substitutes his English mother's name, which is Milton. No, I didn't say she is a descendant of the blind poet Milton, though who shall say she is not? Anthropologists and ethnologists and all the feathered tribe that delight in tracing us back to our source say that those who bear the same name spring from the same root.

The stage director has a smile that reveals teeth of the same waxlike whiteness as his face and the pale, flame-encircled crown. I saw him reveal it at the last première of a Belasco play in New York. An actress, who had been in the cast of several companies he had directed, swept up behind him in her gorgeous first-night plumage and whispered, "Good evening, darling."

Mr. Milton started as though a policeman had said, "You are under arrest." He turned an austere glance upon the presumptuous one, recognized her as one who had played elderly parts in his companies with approved finesse, and expressed his forgiveness in a smile. If, as I believe, the smile is the man, Robert Milton is roguish,

(*Continued on page* 52)

*White*

CARLOTTA MONTEREY

Stage adventuress after the frigid and very grand manner has been touring the States in *Lovely Lady, Embers,* etc.

*White*

ELIZABETH HINES

This winsome prima donna, whose dancing is as charming as her voice, having appeared briefly this season in *June Days,* is now choosing a musical comedy for her Spring appearance

*White*

LOTUS ROBB

As Julia, in George Tyler's production of *The Rivals,* this engaging actress is giving "road" audiences a tonic of eighteenth-century wit

*Kesslere*

MARY BOLAND

Whose characterization of the most rampant and indignant of matrons in *The Cradle Snatchers* is exuberantly funny

*Goldberg*

ELIZABETH RISDON

Whose delicate portrayal of the drab, timid wife in *The Enchanted April* early this season still lingers in the memory

## FLOWERS TO BLOOM IN THE SPRING

*Interesting women in the theatre whose rôles will prove that the flapper has not usurped the stage*

# Those Terrible Movies

*A Medium of Art Expression Far Surpassing the Theatre and the Novel*

By RALPH BLOCK

WHEN other amusements fail, people still like to indulge themselves in an elementary form of snobbery, which consists of saying that the movies are terrible. While it is often true, as a statement of fact, its periodic discovery by selected spirits confers no distinction upon them. In fact, almost everyone knows that the movies in America have become the output of a highly organized machinery, supplying a standard quality of cheer to the American public. He also knows that the producer is the victim of his Frankenstein public, and that the movies are bound to be inferior to the theatre and the novel, in so far as their point of view is limited by their audience to an automatic optimism, never once betraying the fact that life may often be a harsh, accidental and ironic matter. It is only a platitude now to say that the movies are not an art, but a curious social phenomenon and that their creed is summed up in the idea that all who begin in hovels will end at the Ritz.

What might be illuminating on the part of volunteer critics would be to point out that to this amazing conception of an almost perfect world, transcending anything invented since Plato, the movies are bringing a technic of expression surpassing the theatre and the novel in most of the everyday virtues of story-telling.

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THE crudities of the movies are no longer, perhaps lamentably, those of technic. There was something honest and artistically valid about the early movie, in which the romantic folk lore of the modern American was suitably embalmed in a corresponding naïveté of form. It is amusing to think that what was an accidental if natural kind of expression for the early motion picture was picked up by the theatre—trying to say for sophisticated minds something about the intellectual confusion of the day—and pressed into use as expressionism, which is in part only another name for cinematic continuousness.

But the movies, with great integrity of form, dealing as yet with an audience to which the confused values of a world bowled over had not yet penetrated, moved from the elementary story-telling of their beginnings to the classic mold of Æschylus, Euripides, Shakespeare and Racine. The movies have become, in their own ideal at least, the well-made play. The diverting result of this evolution is that ninety per cent. of the motion pictures turned out with automatic precision every year touch a consistently higher average of clear and effective story-telling in dramatic terms than ninety per cent. of the Broadway festival of native drama. In fairness, it would be conceded that few, if any movies, ever reach the standard of the remaining ten per cent. of the theatre. And it might be added that no American movie is ever as bad as some of the plays that reach Broadway.

This comparison is, however, more illuminating when the light is turned on those masters of prose fiction whose aim to delight and encourage a simple-minded audience is attentively enforced by droves of book and magazine publishers. It is not infrequently that the broadest criticism of the movies comes from the ranks of these ladies and gentlemen. It is they no less frequently who look upon the movies with covetous eyes while they are undergoing the pangs of composition, and who after delivering up the child to Herod, reinstate themselves into respectable artistic society by making loud moan at the commercialism of the movies. It is easy enough for an author to decry a process which, faced with the incomplete development and unshaped form of his work, is forced to remodel it to dramatic adequacy. Words are often the accomplice of emptiness, ready to betray the author into believing he has built well. Many a famous story-teller is found wanting when his material is subjected to the classic test of the motion-picture form. In the end, of course, these influences will be a great corrective to literature. Already they have resulted in leaving some to write good novels which have, in their very theme and treatment, little or nothing to do with the camera, and others to write plays and books aimed at production on the screen. In the final process, ladies and gentlemen who think their talents qualify them for the peculiar demands of the camera will bring them there without all the present hocus pocus of putting their ideas first into badly written plays and novels still more badly suited to the screen. If some prose monger wishes later to decorate the subway stands with these ideas embalmed in prose, who can object? They will at least have served first the purpose to which they were born.

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AS for the actor, the critical notion that the movies are inferior to the stage has left the motion-picture actor largely unsung. Although the Barrymore of the movies is none other than that same fellow who plays Hamlet to New York and London, no critic of respectable repute will be led to spend his ideas on the art of acting for the camera. It is true few of them know anything worth saying about it. Here and there the welkin rings for such an one as Lillian Gish, but such praise, though deserved, is largely emotional, a matter of personality, and takes little account of the technical values of the screen pantomimic art. It is an art differing so decisively from acting in the theatre that, offering in its youth no tradition on which the critic may feed, it still remains without exposition or analysis. Nevertheless, in the ranks of lesser-known mimes, unheralded by reports of lucre like unto the profits of stock brokers and department-store owners, there are many actors who have mastered the elements of this expression. Understanding intuitively its plastic nature, and its need for immobility and composure—against which a gesture in motion may stand out as a black chalk-mark on a white wall—they are the forerunners of a future art. There are many bad actors in the movies, although not as many as in the theatre, where the protective standardization of type has allowed many to survive. The exactions of the camera are after all more pitiless than those of the proscenium. On the screen, expressive fluency of body and face is the first requirement. Here again it must be confessed the greater average superiority of the screen never once touches the peaks of great talent marked here and there in the theatre. Even the careful art of Pola Negri is seldom drawn on to fulfil the demands of the contemporary movie and its audience.

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NOW that the theatre has passed through that adolescence which deceived it into thinking that light and decors made a drama, it is possible to observe the movies quietly educating themselves in these elements of visual expression. Their problem is of course vastly more complicated than that of the three-sided box which is the speaking stage.

Lighting and scenic background serve a double function on the screen. They are first inescapable parts of a tightly bound rhythmic, plastic design, which is in constant process of change. They are secondly accompaniments to a pantomimic presentation of ideas, in which they must serve the causes of beauty and utility at the same time. The body and face of the actor must be so lighted and so presented in perspective that every motion is expressive and related to the dramatic purpose. In the theatre the scene is limited and is never in motion—the design though possibly rhythmic is static. Moreover, the problem of photographic light is never involved. An interesting instance of the varying success of the camera will be found in the screen version of *The Beggar on Horseback*. Here is a beauty and sensationalism for the eye which the theatre in the same scale could never touch. Yet the very undistinguished dryness of the theatrical presentation gave the satiric idea a power which the screen finds it hard to achieve. Indeed, the chief failure of the movies as they exist now is in the quality of their ideas. An audience which rebels at ideas has set a standard, the limitations of which reach into the furthest imaginative corner of the screen.

In its exposition of the abstractions of art, the elements of space and the juxtaposition of events in time, the motion camera is closer to the inner structure of music

(*Continued on page* 52)

*Florence Vandamm*

## A FAVORITE BROADWAY COMEDIENNE: RUTH GORDON

***The announcement that this unique little actress, so irresistibly comic as the absurd young wife in "The Fall of Eve," is studying the rôle of Katharina in "The Taming of the Shrew" with a view to a possible Guild production, is decidedly interesting, promising as it does an entirely original and highly amusing portrayal of Shakespeare's boisterous heroine***

# M · U · S · I · C

*"The Jewels of the Madonna" Brings a Lesson to the American Composer. A Hint to Mr. Gershwin*

By GRENVILLE VERNON

THE production of Wolf-Ferrari's *The Jewels of the Madonna,* at the Metropolitan Opera House, was scarcely an epoch-making event. The opera by being at last adopted by the Metropolitan has changed neither its body nor its soul. It remains tawdry, vulgar, blatant, perverse in sentiment and at bottom utterly insincere. It also remains remarkably effective. Its characters are crudely painted with primary colors, but they are characters. Anyone who knows Naples knows that these people are Neapolitans and nothing else. In their manners, their sentiments, in the rhythm of their music throbs the pulse of that festive and also somewhat festering city. It is said that the Metropolitan has never before given *The Jewels* because its spirit has been particularly offensive to those Italians who desire their land to be thought of abroad not as the home of the Cammorra, but as the country of Dante. There is certainly precious little of Dante in *The Jewels,* even though the life it depicts is an inferno of a sort, and it is certainly far from good propaganda to spread among the Nordics of America. No Congressman because of it will be tempted to vote for a repeal of the present immigration law. Signor Mussolini will never give Signor Wolf-Ferrari the Fascist salute, for *The Jewels of the Madonna* is an honor neither to Italian art nor the Italian race.

Why then did Signor Gatti-Casazza decide at last to give this work, a work utterly alien to his calm and aristocratic soul? There can be but one answer, and that answer is Maria Jeritza. Mme. Jeritza wanted a new part, and Mme. Jeritza got it. She wanted to show that as Maliela she could be hysteric and sensual as well as passionate as she was in Tosca or spiritual as in Elizabeth. We can state at once that she succeeded. Whether the success was worth the effort is another thing. It may well again be asked, What price glory? But the glory was there—and the cheers—and not alone from the *claque.* Mme. Jeritza ran the gamut of purely external emotion. She was ribald, she was langorous, and she went to her death with her nerves bared and bleeding. She had never in all her career interpreted more perfectly a character. She filled the house and she won her salary. Let it rest at that.

THE other characters were well taken, although Signor Danise did seem to be a rather paternal lover for a Cammorist chieftain. Signor Martinelli sang well and acted with proper pathos the tortured Gennaro, and Signor Bada made of a minor part another one of his little masterpieces. The scenery was of the old-fashioned type, but Herr Von Wymetal's management of the crowds was masterly. The orchestra was directed ably enough by Signor Papi. He brought out the rhythms and the Neapolitan tunes, and that is all there is to bring out. There isn't a note of original music in *The Jewels.* The greatest composers have borrowed melodic ideas from their predecessors, but they have always repaid their debt with interest. Signor Wolf-Ferrari certainly left out the interest, and he also neglected to take the best part of the principal!

VLADIMIR NEMIROVITCH-DANTCHENKO
**The distinguished director of America's latest operatic sensation, the Moscow Art Theatre Musical Studio, now giving a season in New York at the Jolson Theatre**

And yet to an American audience at the present time the production of *The Jewels* may very well be not without significance. We are continually being told that the future of American opera lies in jazz. Well, in its own way, *The Jewels* is a jazz opera. It takes popular rhythms and popular tunes, and through them expresses the life of a people. The American composer is told to go and do likewise. Perhaps the advice may be good advice. Whoever told Charpentier to take popular tunes and rhythms for his *Louise* certainly gave good advice, and so did he who told Humperdinck to do it for *Hänsel und Gretel.* The crux of the matter lies in the personality of the composer himself. Charpentier and Humperdinck were not satisfied to be mere realists. They had a message of their own to convey, their own vision of beauty to create. They took the tunes and rhythms and transformed them by passing them through the fire of their own genius. What came forth was certainly born of the people, but it was none the less personal. It was democratic art, but it was stamped with the signet of the composer. But *The Jewels* is, as the French say, another pair of sleeves. Wolf-Ferrari took the rhythms and tunes, and they remained but rhythms and tunes. He had no vision, no spiritual message, no sense of beauty. He wrote for a theatre and an audience—and that was all.

IT is idle to say that the rhythms and tunes of *The Jewels* are in themselves unworthy. It was the composer who was unworthy. So too it will be idle to say that the rhythms and tunes of Broadway are unworthy if the composer who attempts to employ them fails. If the product remains but the jazz of the cabaret, and the tunes remain as banal as they sounded in Tin Pan Alley, the composer will of course have failed. He might as well have been a phonograph. But if he happens to possess a vision, if Broadway means to him something more than a mere street filled with vulgar people, if it is a beginning and a symbol rather than an end in itself—then the spirit of jazz may very well come to inspire him.

This does not mean that the spirit of jazz will ever produce what is highest in musical art. It is inconceivable that it should, just as it is inconceivable that a composer saturated with the spirit of the streets of Naples will ever turn out a *Tristan* or a *Don Giovanni.* Broadway with all its superficial glamor will never be the abode of the spiritual things of life, the things which alone inspire the artist to the expression of his highest powers. Jazz was born among African savages and appeals to the savage nature of the modern city dweller. It is a return to the primitive, and a return to the primitive is the sign of a lowered vitality, a sign even perhaps of decadence. Yet even decadence has its place in art, and there is no use in a composer trying to lift himself by his boot straps. The thing which he must be is sincere, just as Charpentier in *Louise* was sincere, and not insincere as was Wolf-Ferrari in *The Jewels of the Madonna.*

IT is whispered that George Gershwin is at work on a jazz opera. Unfortunately *Louise* is no longer in the Metropolitan's repertory, but *The Jewels* is. So let him hie himself to *The Jewels* and take it as an awful example—the example of a man who sold his art for a mess of box-office! Wolf-Ferrari's opera is in the last analysis directed straight at a titilation of the nerves. There is in it not one moment of true emotional exaltation, not one phrase which springs from the heart. It is music written to please a jaded public, and that is all. But even a jaded public has its moments when what is simple and sincere appeals. And these moments are the only ones which a true artist will consider.

©Mishkin

EDWARD JOHNSON

His impersonation of Licino in *La Vestale* stamps him as the noblest operatic Roman of them all

©Mishkin

ROSA PONSELLE

Whose Giula in Spontini's *La Vestale* placed her among the great dramatic sopranos of all time

©Mishkin

PAUL BENDER

The imposing basso as the Barber, not of Seville but of Bagdad, whose voice merits finer music

©Mishkin

MARIA BOURSKAYA

One of the most beautiful women in opera whose devotion to art goes as far as this

©Mishkin

ANGELO BADA

As the clockmaker in *L'Heure Espagnole* has added another miniature masterpiece to his long list of triumphs

©Mishkin

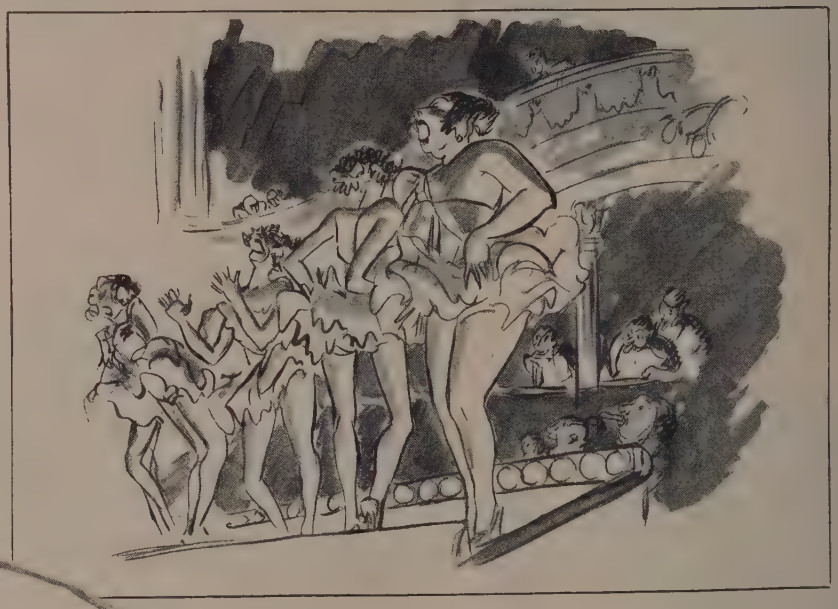
ELIZABETH RETHBERG

Her glorious voice and fine vocal art illuminate Nicolais' rather tedious *Barber of Bagdad*

## OLD OPERA FAVORITES IN NEW RÔLES

*The fresh breeze of novelty sweeps through the Metropolitan*

Nothing but a sudden earthquake can prevent the onrushing Queen of the *Cuddling Cuties* (in instinct and figure a relic of the cave-woman) from kissing the daring young men who sit in the front of the first box. Egbert, who stole away from an examination in tea-pouring at the Young Men's Finishing School, obviously wishes he weren't sitting there. In fact, he wishes he hadn't come at all



Several times during each act a grotesque chorus (ranging in ages from thirty-five to fifty—tall and short, lean and fat, but all reeking with talcum powder) dashes out on the runway. Some shimmie, some stamp up and down, some simply stand still, and very often the song they sing is one "Toodle-de-doo." They make an enormous hit each time and receive at least six encores

The young ladies on the left, according to the program, are Flora La Belle and Gwendolyn May. Their gowns are of solid opalescent sequins. This dazzling effect is enhanced by many brilliantly guaranteed diamond rings. They are singing a ditty about the remarkable accomplishments of *Red-haired Mammas*. Their next song is one about *Little Baby Shoes* or *My Daddy Is in Heaven*, calculated to bring tears to the eyes and much applause

## ON FOURTEENTH STREET

### *Where a Burlesque Show Is a Burlesque Show*

*(Sketches by Helen Hokinson)*

# R · A · D · I · O

*The Wide Appeal of the Air Waves. Appreciative Listeners-in. Some Fine Programs*

By CHARLOTTE GEER

"RADIO is turning us into a nation of letter-writers," we said as we stood looking at the rows of filing cabinets in which WEAF tucks away the communications of its admirers. When we pulled open a drawer and began reading the letters our amazement deepened. These were no mere formal notes of appreciation, they were human documents, sketches from life itself and in almost every one was a story welling up beneath the simple phrases of the writer.

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"DEAR WEAF (writes a listener-in from a distant city): I am a hard-boiled egg, occupied with the bringing up of three fine kids with the help of the finest wife there is, and material needs occupy my mind more than they ought to. I did not weep for years. But just now Roxy played 'Capriccio Italienne,' and I, an old man—forty years young—shed tears. Why? Because I thought of my mother who did not take part in the beauties you and others wave into the ether. And of all mothers since the beginning of mankind who did not because there was no Radio before this God-blessed age."

Our next "find" was a letter from Kentucky:

"I think," says the writer without preamble, "that Radio is one of the seven wonders of the world. To think we live way back in the mountains of Kentucky and can enjoy the beautiful programs you present. We never heard classical music until we got the Radio."

Think of it! a row of vacuum tubes and a spool or two of wire introducing the world of classical music to a family of mountaineers.

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AND by way of contrast here is one from a New York City flat:

"Dear WEAF: Radio certainly takes the drudge out of drudgery when it comes to household duties such as dusting and ironing, etc. For many years I was employed in an office and until I got my Radio housework seemed a bit dull and monotonous."

There you are. The eternal and ever-recurring theme of the novelist of to-day, the favorite problem of "so they were married and lived unhappily ever after" solved, eliminated, evaporated by means of an articulate mahogany box.

"We are far from the madding crowd up here," writes a Radio fan from Ontario, Canada, "as you will understand when I tell you that this letter must travel by dog train for ten days at least before striking the railway. It may be of interest to the two 'culprits' (Billy Jones and Ernest Hare) to know that people so far away from New York and so much out of the world look forward to their weekly frolic."

HOW would you like to be a singer standing before a metal "mike" in form hardly more beautiful than a soap shaker, conscious meanwhile that your voice is reaching the wilds of Canada, the mountains of Kentucky, the flats of Harlem, an isolated farmhouse, a hospital, a ship at sea? If we were such an artist we wouldn't exchange our limitless Radio audience for all

MILTON J. CROSS

Chief Announcer for Stations WJZ and WJY, has won, through the personality of his voice, an audience of which any actor might boast

the tiny concert-hall groups in the world."

"Station WEAF: We want to thank you for the splendid program broadcast last evening through your station through the allied stations for music that we would never be able to hear out here except through your courtesy.

"Up here in the hills we have a rather dull time of it in the evening. We have but one train a day and there are many days in the Winter when we cannot even get to town for the mail. Perhaps you can picture the pleasure of the farmers and ranchmen located out here in the West, where we have little outside our reading for our Winter nights' pleasure were it not for the Radio."

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WE are asked by the director of one of the smaller stations to impress on our readers the importance of writing to the studio. "An audience at a play," he said, "or at a concert feels constrained to applaud. Of course the vehemence with which they do so depends largely on the amount of pleasure the artist has afforded, but some small patter of appreciation is considered almost compulsory and is invariably accorded the poorest performer. We Radio people have no earthly means of discovering whether we pleased you or even whether we have an audience at all except through the written word of the listener-in. In order to give you a good performance we must have proof that someone is listening and someone is interested. Write anything you want, praise or protest, but for heaven's sake write!"

Fan letters are more numerous now than they have been in the past two years, we were told at WEAF, as the Radio audience increases every month. But the directors of the station are somewhat surfeited with praise. A few lines of constructive criticism from the people who do not entirely enjoy their output would assist them in their striving for "bigger and better broadcasting." We sympathize with this laudable desire for knocks, but at the same time we agree with the army of the B. C. L. that it is difficult to criticize the superman at 195 Broadway.

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PEOPLE who regard the newspaper Radio programs as a study in gibberish have no conception of the variety and beauty of the average Radio program broadcast by WEAF and WJZ. No doubt this is also true of the stations on the West coast, but of this we have no certain knowledge. We hear them occasionally but never with sufficient distinctness to enjoy them from the standpoint of musical achievement.

On the other hand the Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston stations which come through to us with the same volume as the New Yorkers do not compare in program building to these stations of the Radio Corporation and of the telephone company. Moreover, WJZ with its new super-power lungs and WEAF with its network of sixteen stations more or less—probably more by the time this is published—are heard by the nation, so that in reviewing them we can hardly be considered provincial.

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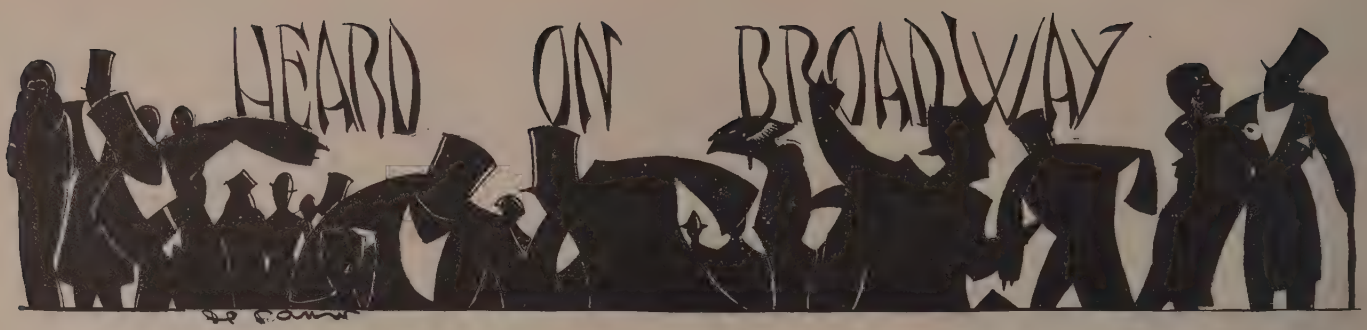
TO go back to the programs. Not very long ago we were preparing to go out in search of amusement, and in the back of our head we were trying to decide which would fit in best with our moods, a theatre, a movie or a concert. In searching the paper to this end we glanced at the Radio page and, without further preamble, removed our hat and lit the open fire, prepared to make a night of it at home. This was what we read: At eight o'clock on WJZ Cosmo Hamilton was presenting his first Radio novel, written especially for that medium and read by the author himself. Who wouldn't stay home to hear Cosmo himself do a novel? After that the same station would transmit the concert of the Liederkranz Society. Over at WEAF the Yale Glee Club from the Town Hall would be brought to our hearthstone by direct wire and for the midnight hours Roxy's Gang were staging a party at Atlantic City. In each instance we knew the transmission would be flawless.




By L'Homme Qui Sait

WATSON BARRATT, chief scenic designer for the SHUBERTS—it was he who did the settings for *The Student Prince, Artists and Models* and *Princess Flavia*—is himself an embodiment of High Art. He is nearly six feet four. After studying with HOWARD PYLE, Barratt started out in New York as an illustrator, doing magazine covers and pictures to accompany stories; but somehow he felt he needed a broader scope. His long arms felt cramped at a mere easel or drawing board. So he became a scenic artist, and now he is happy creating palatial flights of stairs and chandeliers the size of summer-houses and fireplaces that you could drive a Ford through.

It is eminently fitting that Barratt should live in a duplex apartment. To walk into his studio living-room is like entering a realm of enchantment. Mystic sea-green. Richly exotic ornaments. Even the little rooms above, opening on the mezzanine balcony, are vivid dreams of color. How, we wondered, is the tall Mr. Barratt content to sleep in a bedroom of only ordinary ceiling height? His friend, FRED E. DAYTON, explained. "I imagine," he said, "that Watson does his sleeping lying down."

Speaking of BARRATT and DAYTON, there is much speculation as to the future activities of the SOCIETY OF ILLUSTRATORS in connection with the theatre. For a good many years this organization put on annual entertainments of a satirical and rather frisky sort for private audiences, till at last, three years ago, the women members protested that they too should take part, with the result that there was given on the Century Roof an entertainment called *Artists and Models,* which was taken over by the SHUBERTS on a royalty basis and transformed into the first of the famous revues of that name. Barratt and Dayton, assisted by their clever wives, were the prime movers of the undertaking. The society was fortunate also in having as its treasurer HARRY L. SPARKS, a banker.

But prosperity brought dissension. When the second amateur show was being got together, the illustrators decided that this time they would present a revue which would "go" on Broadway practically in its entirety, instead of having merely four or five numbers retained in the professional edition. Therefore great was the chagrin of certain illustrator-dramatists when the SHUBERTS discarded virtually all of the amateur material. Last Spring a group of irreconcilables within the organization frustrated the BARRATT-DAYTON-SPARKS efforts to assemble a third annual show. So Barratt and the SHUBERT forces went ahead and concocted a Paris Edition, which has proved nearly twice as popular as either of the previous ones. This leaves the illustrators in a rather awkward position. They have parted company from the goose that laid the golden eggs. Their treasury still bulges with royalties from those first two shows—but will there ever be any more?

Perhaps some of the non-rambunctious illustrators may get back to Broadway via the Dutch Treat Club, an association composed of about three hundred artists, writers and editors, which also is addicted to annual shows and which last Spring staged a public entertainment at the Empire Theatre. ROBERT C. BENCHLEY'S celebrated treasurer's report was first tried out before a Dutch Treat audience. MARC CONNELLY, GEORGE MIDDLETON, WILLIAM B. JOHNSTONE and many other dramatists are active members. More and more this club is establishing ties with the theatrical world. This year's Dutch Treat Show, presented some time next month under the supervision of CLARENCE BUDDINGTON KELLAND, will be watched by the scouts from the Rialto even more closely than usual, for in the light frivolities of the *literati* there may be found something suitable for luring the lucre to the box-office.

MICHAEL ARLEN, who returned to England about Christmas time, gave an interview before setting sail in which he was quoted as saying that only as a novelist can an author gain fame. "A man may write a dozen successful plays and still be virtually unknown to the public at large." So the author of *The Green Hat,* deeming verdant bay leaves to be ideal head-gear, has for the nonce gone back to the creating of books, despite having four new plays contracted for but not yet completed. Still we seem to have heard of writers who managed to make themselves known by means of the acted word. The names of EUGENE O'NEILL and MOLNAR have been lisped at the best tea-parties; nor is that of CHANNING POLLOCK meaningless to the Man on the Street. Even NOEL COWARD, new to our shores and possessed of no reading public, has rolled up quite a tidy reputation. Surely MR. ARLEN paints an unduly dark picture of the Successful Dramatist Eating Out His Heart in Obscurity. But then one must say *something* when interviewed!

Our cherished illusion as to the mentality of chorus girls received a jolt when we dropped in at one of the final rehearsals of *The Song of the Flame.* Seeing one of the petite members of the ensemble reading a book while resting between dance numbers, we nervily approached and inquired what might be the title of the tome. It was the third volume of *Jean Christophe.* A girl sitting next to her spoke up and said that she, too, was keen about ROMAIN ROLLAND; and she began to discuss the merits of his other works in a way that soon left us gasping. Unwilling to disclose our ignorance to the intellectuals of the pony ballet, we made a strategic retreat. And even our tiptoeing was inferior to theirs.

Apropos of *The Song of the Flame,* it is an interesting fact that the last scene of the piece was not set down on paper until less than a week before the Wilmington opening. The authors, OTTO HARBACH and OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN, had agreed what it was to be about, and the scenery and costumes were being made, but the actual dialogue had never been written. One would imagine that ARTHUR HAMMERSTEIN, who was spending about $200,000 on the production, must have felt slightly nervous.

Entertainments for the fatigued man of affairs may appear on the surface to be lowbrow, but more and more the devising of them is being entrusted to highbrows. In the December number of this magazine it was pointed out that the librettos of *Sunny, No, No, Nanette,* and *Rose-Marie* were chiefly the work of a former college professor. Let us add that BRIAN HOOKER, author of the lyrics of *The Vagabond King* and co-author of the book of that show, used to teach Sophomore English at Yale and still ranks as that university's most eminent poet. And now we learn that the melodies for the next *Ziegfeld Follies* are to be composed by WERNER JANSSEN, an erudite musician, who is editor of the august Boston Music Company. Indeed, in the theatrical world of to-day things have reached a pass where a cultural background no longer disqualifies a man from being considered of use.

DANIEL FROHMAN, who is affectionately regarded as the dean of theatrical managers, was recently entertained as guest of honor at one of the Green Room Club's midnight revels. Among those who took part in the program were ARNOLD DALY, WILTON LACKAYE, JAY VELIE, ROLLO LLOYD, SAM SIEGEL, JACK BOHN, VICTOR SUTHERLAND and LEO EDWARDS. S. JAY KAUFMAN, the club's Prompter, introduced them in turn in his characteristic fashion. A midnight revel, open to the public, will be held at the Belasco Theatre on January 31, affording playgoers an opportunity to see how some of the best-known professionals of Broadway amuse themselves and artfully kid each other.

(*Continued on page* 64)

# THE AMATEUR STAGE

Edited by M. E. KEHOE

"TAMBOURINE," the twentieth annual Union operetta of the University of Michigan, which played the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, on December 29th, is perhaps the most elaborate and highly developed musical comedy ever attempted in University dramatic circles. This year's book was the work of Walker Everett, a senior in the University, and Valentine L. Davies, a junior, while the greater number of the lyrics were composed by Milton A. Peterson, a junior law student, who also wrote practically all of the music. The production was taken on a tour of thirteen cities

*Above:* Daniel S. Warner, of Pontiac, Mich., as The Queen of Hearts in the prologue from *Tambourine*, produced at the University of Michigan

*Right:* Milton Peterson, of Detroit; Stanley Lewy, of Chicago, and Harry Lathrop, of Detroit, "show girls" and dancers in *Tambourine*

Milton Peterson, in a character dance in *Tambourine*

J. Louis Schillinger and Louise Cone, working on the walls of the Birmingham Little Theatre, which have been decorated in the Rackhaus manner

# The Birmingham Little Theatre

*The Flourishing Offspring of a Busy Southern Mining City*

AWAKENING interest in things dramatic in the industrial city of Birmingham is seen in the opening of the third season of the Little Theatre of Birmingham, Ala., before a capacity audience and the announcement that there is a full roster of members with a long waiting list.

Persons who know Birmingham as a hive of iron and steel-making plants, limestone quarries, coal and ore mines are not accustomed to associating the fine arts with such an environment, but this city has more than once provided an unexpected dénouement to the story she relates to investigators of Birmingham's assets. She does not hesitate to point out that she ranks third among the cities of the United States in the number of manuscripts submitted American magazine editors yearly, and it is no idle boast to say that her Little Theatre has already attained to first rank.

THE Birmingham Little Theatre was organized in the Spring of 1923. Mrs. Vassar L. Allen was asked to accept the presidency of the organization, and she did so with the understanding that a board of twenty members assure financing the project for the first year, or pledge themselves to obtain 400 members. The number was promptly obtained, the Little Theatre started out on a firm basis, and it has been largely due to Mrs. Allen's guidance that the success of the movement has been maintained. Since the Spring of 1923 the original organization and various working committees, with one or two exceptions, have remained unchanged.

With the exception of the three Summer months, a play has since been produced every six weeks. A salaried director has been in charge, and operating expenses are met solely by funds received from monthly dues, each member being entitled to two seats for each production. The membership of 550 for the current season has been oversubscribed; there have been no financial deficits. No individual seats are sold for any performance except as a courtesy to out-of-town guests of members.

THROUGH the efforts of Mrs. R. C. Woodson, assisted by Mr. Oliver Hinsdell, now director of the Dallas Little Theatre, Mr. Bernard Szold was obtained as director of the Birmingham Little Theatre. Mr. Szold is a graduate of the Dramatic School of the Carnegie Institute of Technology and for the past two Summers has been a member of the faculty of the Rocky Mountain Art Colony, at Estes Park, Colorado. His dramatic instinct, together with his technical training, accounts in large measure for the phenomenal success he has attained as a director.

The auditorium of the Margaret Allen Building provides a home for the Little Theatre, being both beautifully and advantageously located. The auditorium has a seating capacity of 200. Mural designs on the walls, in the spirit of Arthur Rackhaus Puck, are the work of J. Louis Schillinger and have been beautifully carried out. Settings for the theatre, after designs by and made under the supervision of Mr. Schillinger, have ranged from the realistic in his beautiful productions for Heijermann's *Good Hope* to the use of drapes and symbolical lighting effects in other plays, and considerable ingenuity is called for in all these arrangements, owing to the smallness of the stage.

VERY nearly professional in its efficiency is the stage "crew"; after two years of working together, the chairman of "props" having an unmarred record of "no slips." Stage director and carpenters have that uncanny ability that assures the building of sets from an old strip of canvas and a carpet tack. Lighting equipment is thoroughly efficient and the effects, with an artist at the switchboard, have done wonders in giving finish to the pictures. Costuming is in the hands of a real artist, giving her the opportunity to produce effects of silks and sheer stuffs out of homespun materials.

Expert assistance has been rendered by the educational committee in casting the plays. Players are recruited from the public at large, the sole prerequisite being ability. In this way the organization is building a large acting body. Productions have been staged with as many as ten new players in the cast. An invaluable committee, assisted by the Junior League, has charge of the tickets, and the choice of plays produced comes within the province of the dramatic committee.

*Below:* Bernard Szold, Director of the Birmingham Little Theatre. His technical training and dramatic instinct account for his remarkable success as a director

*Above:* Mrs. Vassar Allen, President of the Birmingham Little Theatre, whose executive skill and ability has been largely responsible for the success of this group

MRS. HUBERT RYDING has donated a prize of $50, to be known as the Miss W. M. Allen prize, and the board of the Little Theatre is giving $30 and $20 prizes for the best one-act plays by Alabamians. The winner of this contest for 1925, *'Lijah,* was written by Edgar Valentine Smith, winner of the O. Henry Memorial Award in 1923 for a short story. *'Lijah,* being a dramatization of the story by the same name which appeared in *Harper's Magazine.* This year the plays winning the three prizes will be produced in May.

The Little Theatre co-operates with the University of Alabama and the Alabama Polytechnic Institute in encouraging the writing of plays by students. In accordance with the plan of the theatre board to encourage the latent creative ability of play-writers, a play by Harry Hamilton, in charge of the School of Dramatics at the Polytechnic Institute, will be given its première production in January. The publicity department of the theatre has been unusually fortunate in the co-operation of the three daily papers, *The Birmingham News, The Birmingham Age-Herald* and *The Birmingham Post.*

The following plays have been staged to date:

*Where but in America,* Wolfe; *Glory of the Morning,* Leonard; *Joint Owners in Spain,* Brown; *Belinda,* Milne; Chamber Scene from *Romeo and Juliet; Tents of the Arabs,* Dunsany; *Moonshine,* Hopkins; *Seventeen,* Tarkington; *Liliom,* Molnar; *Wappin' Wharf,* Brooks; *Rollo's Wild Oat,* Kummer; *Children of Earth,* Brown; *You and I,* Barry; *The Intimate Stranger,* Tarkington; *The Good Hope,* Heijermans; *Oh, I Say,* Norton; *Before Breakfast,* Torgerson; *The Second Daughter,* Felicia Metcalf; *'Lijah,* Smith; *The Torch Bearers,* Kelly, and *Outward Bound,* Vane.

The board of the Little Theatre is composed of the following: President, Mrs. Vassar L. Allen; first vice-president, Mrs. John London; second vice-president, Mrs. Murray Brown; secretary, Mrs. George Clark; treasurer, Mrs. Samuel L. Earle. Members of the board: Miss W. M. Allen, Mrs. L. T. Beecher, Miss Lila May Chapman, Mrs. Frank Clark, Mrs. Earle Drennen, Mrs. Alex London, Miss Letitia McNeel, Mrs. Herbert Ryding, Mr. M. R. Hubbert Smith, Mrs. E. M. Tutwiler, Jr.; Mrs. Priestly Toulmin, Mrs. Louis Saks, Mrs. H. U. Sims, Mrs. C. R. Sexton, Mrs. Robert Thach, Mrs. R. C. Woodson, Mr. J. Louis Schillinger, Mr. Allen J. Loehr, Mrs. Erwin Caldwell, Mr. William Warren, Mrs. David Roberts, Mrs. W. S. Lovell, Mrs. Paul Earle and Mrs. Germain Wilkinson.

Scene from *Outward Bound,* produced under the direction of Bernard Szold, with Junius Walthall, brother of Henry B. Walthall, as Scrubby

### THE MEMPHIS LITTLE THEATRE

THE Memphis Little Theatre announces the acquisition of Miner Coburn, of Chicago, as director of the organization for the remainder of the present season.

Mr. Coburn, who is known as an actor and director in both the modern and classic field of the drama, directed their first production of the season, Barry's *You and I,* which played a week to packed houses at the new Playhouse. He has been associated with many of the leaders of the Little Theatre movement, including Oliver Hinsdell, of Dallas; Alexander Dean and Winifred Ward, of Northwestern University; George V. Denny, of the Carolina Playmakers, and others equally prominent.

The Memphis Little Theatre, after five years of struggle, reorganized last Spring, and has progressed with astonishing rapidity. Aided by the Memphis Drama League, in a drive for funds, an old stable in the rear of the Memphis Academy of Arts Building has been rehabilitated into a playhouse, and this Little Theatre group has now established itself on a sound working basis.

The stable theatre, seating one hundred and twenty-five people, is not only novel, but also artistic in structure. What were originally harness-room and carriage house are now a foyer and auditorium. Benches are used to seat the audience and the stage curtain is at once artistic and in keeping with the atmosphere. A goodly sum has been expended on lighting equipment and other details essential to artistic work—a plaster dome being one of the modern ideas in theatre arts with which they are experimenting. And with the coming of the new year a workshop is to be established.

# FASHIONS

AS INTRODUCED BY THE WOMEN OF THE STAGE AND SCREEN

*Models from Knox*

This brown English shawl sport coat is quite striking with its broad white stripe and white fox collar

This collarless tweed sport coat brings back the brilliantly colored scarf, which is smartly tied in a four-in-hand

Suzanne Caubet, who is to appear shortly in Cosmos Hamilton's new play, has selected these sport hats, coats and scarfs for her Spring outfit at Knox's

*Photos Lucas-Kanarian*

*(Top of page)*
Very flattering is this large rolled-up brim hat of pale pink felt, with a tailored grosgrain tie-bow on the side

The very newest motor coat for Spring is this rose-colored novelty tweed, with scarf-effect collar

The success of *Craig's Wife* is due to the poise and strength of Chrystal Herne's acting and her perfect selection of clothes to fit the part she is playing

Margalo Gillmore, the sympathetic wife in *The Green Hat*, lends a great deal of color to this serious play by her youthful appearance and simplicity of dress

Mary Nash, who so ably portrays a French opera-singer in *A Lady's Virtue*, is very intriguing in this two-piece frock of crimson kitten's ear crêpe, with collar and cuffs of white ermine

Ina Claire, in the *Last Mrs. Cheyney*, wears as usual delightful gowns. This black velvet frock is ideal for a dinner or informal evening

Gertrude Lawrence, who is one of the important reasons for the success of *Charlot's Revue*, selected this brocaded evening coat with fox trimming from Lucien Lelong of Paris

Lola Mende, featured in the *Charlot's Revue*, wears this evening gown of blue and gold brocade, which depends solely upon dignity of cut and material for its classic beauty

Nancy Carroll, dancing in *Mayflower*, was seen strolling up Fifth Avenue in the latest royal-blue kid boots, bound with grey and cuffed with caracul to match her coat

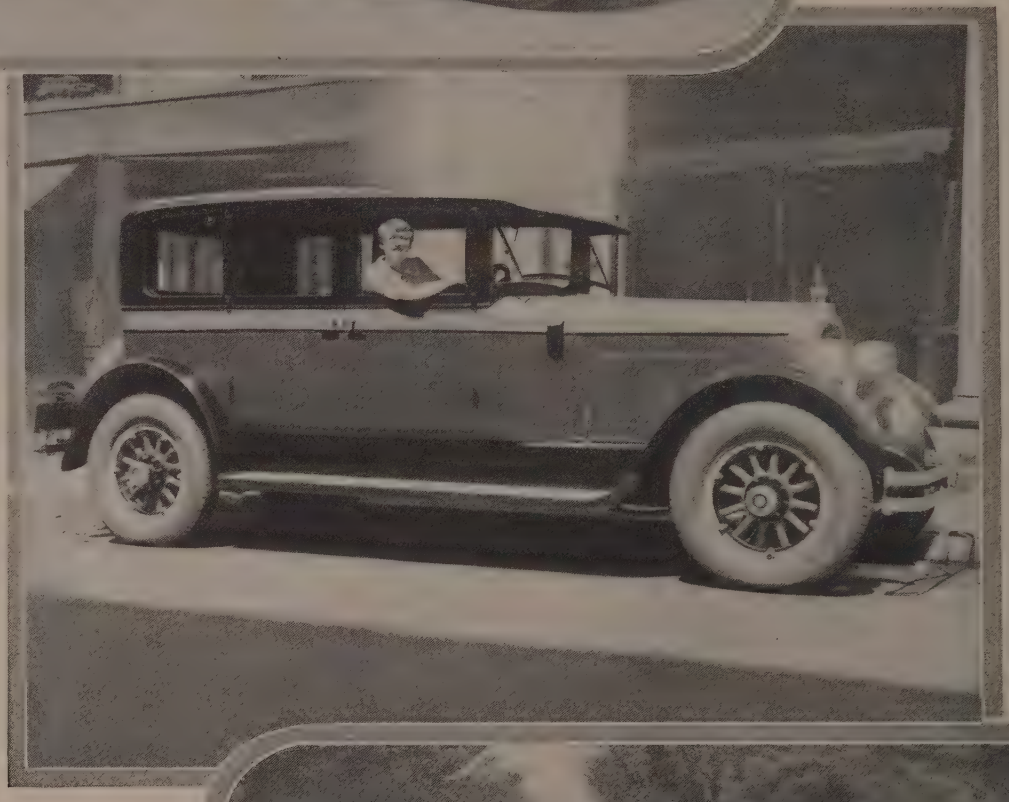
Natalie Travers, playing in the modern *Hamlet*, is very chic in a golden-brown kid boot, cuffed with moire leather of a darker shade

For very dressy wear, this beautifully fitted brown kid front, with *bois de rose* suède quarter and sable cuff

Mr. Delman, of the Delman Shoe Salon, is the designer of these unusual boots

## CARS FOR THE PLAYERS' PLAYTIME: AUTOMOBILING IS A POPULAR RECREATION OF THE HARD-WORKING ACTOR

The Diana light straight eight is an ideal car for a woman to manage as Yvonne D'Arle, prima donna of the Municipal Opera Company of St. Louis, has discovered to her delight. The *eight cylinders in line* are as simple as six and as powerful as twelve. A new type steering gear makes the car easy to handle in the heaviest of traffc, while the four-wheel Lockheed hydraulic brakes give positive action with only a slight foot pressure



Recently Ethel Shutta had to appear not only as the dancing star of *Louie the 14th*, but also in the *Ziegfeld Follies*. Each night she rushed from the Cosmopolitan Theatre on Fifty-ninth Street to the New Amsterdam on Forty-second, and since there was only a four-minute schedule between the theatres, reliable transportation was absolutely necessary. The vivacious little dancer could have chosen no better car for this service than her Marmon sedan

A familiar Hollywood picture is that of Norma Shearer starting out for a spin in her bright Chrysler roadster, for one of Miss Shearer's favorite pastimes is driving through the country, her automobile taking the hills with ease, skimming over the roads with a flashing speed and a minimum amount of vibration

*(Below)*

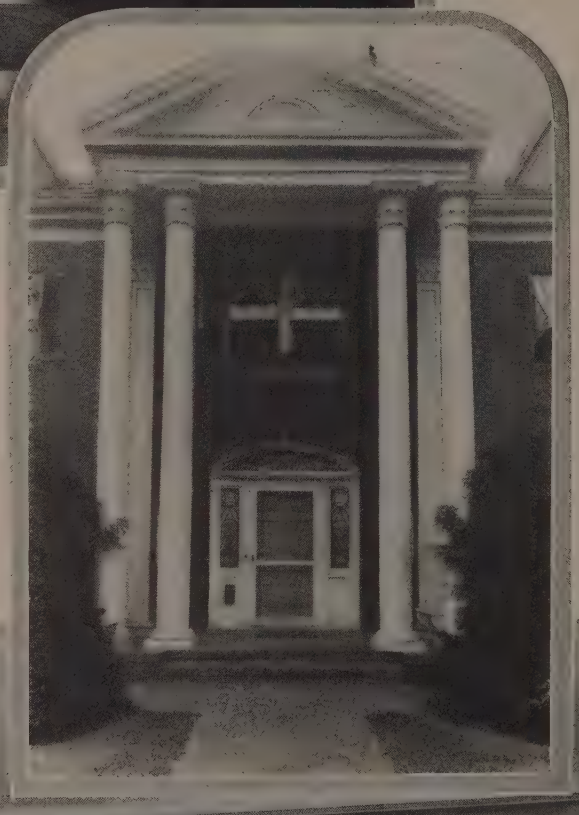
To those ardent movie fans who have visions of Rudolph Valentino lounging about an incense burner in an exotic dressing-gown, this picture must be something of a revelation. Yet the super-sheik often spends hours in his garage tinkering with the inside of his several cars, for he is as familiar with the varieties of pistons, cylinders and connecting rods as he is with the varieties of a screen hero's wooing

This stunning enclosed-drive Franklin limousine, with its powerful engine and its highly practical and efficient air-cooling system, is a striking example of perfect automobile construction. The Stromberg carburetor, automatically furnishing the best idling and running mixtures, assures reliable starting even at 20 degrees below zero. The smartness of the long, sweeping body is carried out in every detail from the doeskin-finished upholstery to the fine Windemere mountings finished in hammered silver

With the royalties earned by his play, *The Vortex*, Noel Coward, brilliant English author and actor, bought this fine Rolls Royce. It was to be expected that the dramatist, who denounces sham and tawdriness, would choose a car famous for its quiet distinction and exquisiteness. Since nothing escapes the observant eye of this versatile young man, he noted at once the beauty of the Brewster custom-built body and the durability of the Fire stone balloon tires

The spacious foyer, with its delicately tinted walls and fine fireplace, is a pleasant introduction to this charming home. Beyond the stairs one glimpses the cozy breakfast room, with its latticed ceiling and long windows, which afford a beautiful view of the garden

*Kenneth Murchison, Architect*



The house, from the entrance, suggests dignity with its classic pillars, while the red bricks, green blinds and bright hues from the window-boxes and surrounding shrubbery give the building a homelike and colorful spirit

# THE HOUSE THAT MITZI BUILT. THE LITTLE HUNGARIAN STAR'S NEW HOME AT WHITE PLAINS IS A FINE EXAMPLE OF LATE GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE

Everything in this large living-room breathes comfort and luxuriousness. The rich rug and hangings contrast delightfully with the highly polished woodwork. The armchairs and settees of exquisite needle-point spell not only elegance but ease. In fact, all the appointments—bright lamps, picturesque screens, beautifully colored vases—mark the personality of a connoisseur in home-building

*Photos Underwood and Underwood*

# THE AMBASSADORS' CHOICE

Those who are selected to represent this country at the courts of the great capitals must in turn select the things which will be in keeping with the importance of their missions.

Ten prominent diplomats have recently chosen Packard cars as affording that distinction so necessary to their activities.

In England, a Packard Six has appeared at the Court of Saint James's; while in France, an Eight has stood, an object of beauty, at the gates of the Palais de l'Elysée.

In either Six or Eight is found the full measure of Packard beauty, Packard distinction and Packard dependability.

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our colorful little book of Parisian toilette specialties, tells all about Lip Pomade as well as the many other ROGER & GALLET creations. *Complimentary on request.*

# YOUNG WOODLEY

(*Continued from page* 28)

Woodley is quite content, however, to forget about the match. Presently Laura inquires about young Cope.

LAURA: What sort of a boy is he?

WOODLEY: Oh, just a kid. Why?

LAURA: He came to me the other day . . . with some rather embarrassing questions.

WOODLEY: What did he want to know?

LAURA: It was about this business with the boy Riley.

WOODLEY: The little—I say, I'm awfully sorry. He ought to have had more sense, but he's awfully innocent.

LAURA: If it was genuine, it doesn't matter. Go on telling me about yourself, Roger.

Young Woodley tells her that he is looking forward to going to Cambridge and after that, probably into his father's business—making soap. The conversation then takes a new tack, Laura apologizing for her husband's sarcasm the former afternoon in the Prefect's house.

WOODLEY: I don't think he means it.

LAURA: Do you wonder I don't care to go to school functions, when I know how people are feeling towards him, hating him, and me, as his wife, as though, just because I am his wife, I must be like him.

WOODLEY: I'm so sorry. I had no idea. Don't—don't cry, please.

LAURA: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to behave like that. (*She touches his hand lightly; he flinches.*)

WOODLEY: All the fellows like you awfully. They can't understand. . . .

LAURA: How I came to marry Mr. Simmons. Is that it?

WOODLEY: I must be going.

LAURA: I'm sorry: you must come again soon.

WOODLEY: No—I—think—if you don't mind—it would be better—if I didn't.

LAURA: What is it? Don't you want to come?

WOODLEY: Yes, I—I want to awfully, but—really, it would be better not.

LAURA: But why, Roger?

WOODLEY: Oh, I—I oughtn't to tell you. You'll hate me for it. You'll never want to see me again, but I—feel awful about it, but—but—well I'm most terribly in love with you. There—now I've said it. Are you furious with me?

LAURA: Furious? Roger—— (*She holds out her arms to him. He stands a moment wild-eyed, then stumbles across to her and falls on his knees beside the sofa, his head in her lap*) Roger, darling—Roger—— (*She stoops and raises his face to hers. Their lips meet in a long kiss.*)

WOODLEY: All day long I've been telling myself I wouldn't come this afternoon. I thought it was wrong and wicked of me, and that you'd hate me for it if you knew. You mustn't stay with him, you must leave him, now that you know I love you.

LAURA: I can't Roger. You musn't think of it. It's impossible. Roger—kiss me again. Don't speak, kiss me.

Another passionate embrace follows. While they are locked in each other's arms, Simmons appears at the open window. He stands transfixed.

SIMMONS: Laura, will you have the goodness to explain the meaning of this extraordinary conduct?

WOODLEY: I am in love with your wife.

SIMMONS: Indeed? I think you had better remove yourself, my friend.

Bitter words between husband and wife follow Woodley's exit. At length Laura convinces her husband that the affair was not premeditated and that he has no right to accuse her of the things he is thinking.

SIMMONS: So this was a mere affair of the moment on which I so unfortunately intruded? And you are in no way ashamed of your behavior.

LAURA: Ashamed? Sorry perhaps.

SIMMONS: I'll make him sorry.

LAURA: What are you going to do?

SIMMONS: Do? What do you suppose? Do you imagine I am going to keep him here now? I shall go straight to the Head—get him expelled.

LAURA: No, you can't! Frank, listen, it was my fault—utterly. I led him on—I made him make love to me. You can't expel him. I mean it, Frank. If you do this, I shall leave you.

Simmons finally agrees to reconsider his intention. He leaves the room in a dudgeon, but is no sooner out when the maid comes in to state that Mr. Woodley is still waiting in the hall. Laura has the distraught youth sent in to her. With a studied coolness she sweeps aside his passionate entreaties.

LAURA: Roger—listen to me. It is hard for me to explain, but you are taking all this too seriously. It was wrong of me, I know, to behave as I did—to let you kiss me—but . . . I was sorry for you—and I just didn't think. But that is all there is to it.

WOODLEY: You mean O—you don't love me . . . you were only—playing with me?

LAURA: Roger, please don't take it like that——

WOODLEY: I'll go now. (*He goes to door and comes back a step*) Oh—might I have my poems back?

LAURA: Of course—I forgot. I'll give them to you. (*She takes them from a locked drawer, hands them to him, and then goes over to the fireplace. He takes them, looks at them for a moment and then tears them across twice and flings the pieces on the floor.*) Why do you do that?

WOODLEY: I've been getting too sentimental. Good-bye.

* * * * * * *

THE first scene of the third act takes place in the Prefect's Room as before, tea-time, two days later. His companions have noticed and wondered at Woodley's depression of spirits. Finally Ainger tries to draw him out, hinting, incidentally, that he saw

(*Continued on page* 62)

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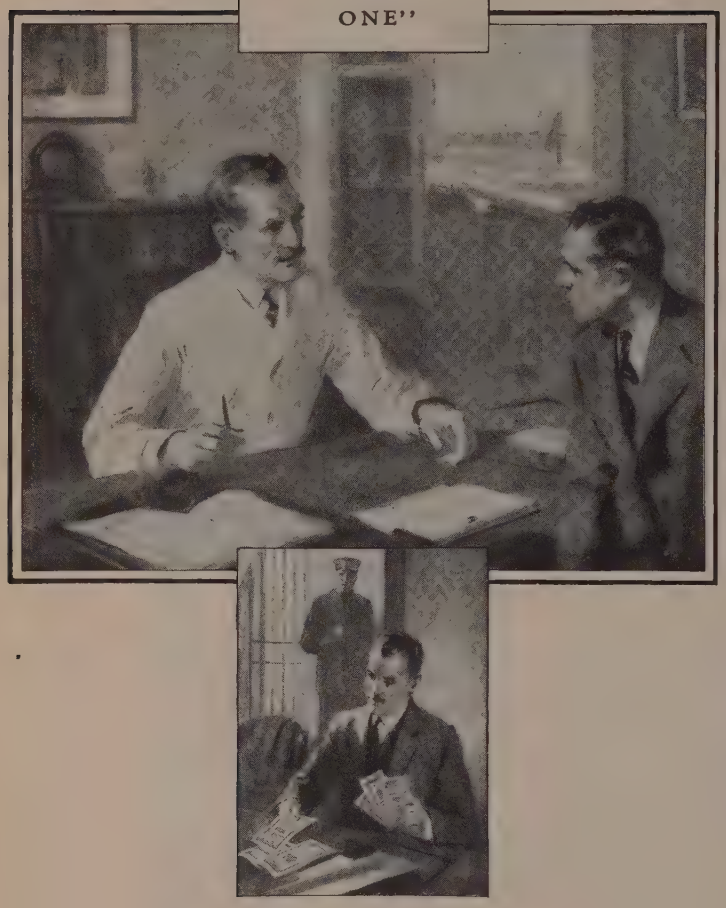

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BONDS - ACCEPTANCES — SHORT TERM NOTES

## THOSE TERRIBLE MOVIES

(*Concluded from page* 32)

than any other instrument of the artist. If there is any indictment to be made of the movies, it is that they have allowed this power to disclose the full aspect of life and the figure of man hung in the abyss of space, to stop at a conventional point, short of revelation. Sometimes this power appears accidentally in such an avowedly naturalistic picture as *Grass*. Yet, despite the conventional approach of the motion-picture studios, which have become set in a practical alphabet of meaning, the modern theatre can seldom compete with the film for beauty of line, movement and composition. At its best, the physical theatre lacks the one element which gives magic to the poorest movie, the enchantment of motion.

In the end the movies lack a civilized point of view toward their material—unequal at least to the standards of an intelligent world. Were a theatre to be devised for them and an audience created, they would have no reason for shame or timidity. They need only to look honestly at life; there is nothing in their instrument to forbid it.

## OUR PLAYWRIGHTS AS EUROPE SEES THEM

(*Concluded from page* 12)

takes the place of melody. The swiftness of the American work amazingly appeals to the English people, though I doubt if Englishmen will long be content with the tiresome repetitions of America.

In *No, No, Nanette,* for example, which is based on a book by an Englishwoman, Miss May Edgington, we get two tunes interminably repeated. In *Mercenary Mary,* which I thought more amusing than *No, No, Nanette,* we get similar repetitions. I doubt if that fashion will long continue to be entertaining in England. We are a more individual people than the Americans, with a wider range of choice, and less easily reduced to obedience. It is easier for one man to make an American crowd do what he tells it than it is for him to make an English crowd so obedient. We cannot be stunned into accepting things because they are incessantly repeated to us. A drum has only to be hit often enough to send all the Americans who hear it to their knees in submission to authority, but the English mind gets irritated by continual drumming. That, partly, is why *The Emperor Jones,* by Mr. O'Neill, was a failure in London. The one thing that was likely to make a failure of *Mercenary Mary* was the excessive noise in the orchestra, the hard thumping on the drum. Nevertheless, it is true that the moving picture and the jazz songs are immensely popular in England, and these are probably the only dramatic products of America that have influenced our lives. I hope it will not always be so. I hope that before long we shall be deriving some substance for the legitimate theatre from the American theatre, and that the Eugene O'Neills and the Susan Glaspells will be as commonly found on our stage as the Shaws and Galsworthys are on theirs. But that time is not now, and one must frankly say that the signs of its coming have not yet appeared.

## MIRRORS OF STAGELAND

(*Concluded from page* 30)

tender, understanding and wise. Wise, and more than a little sad, in his wisdom of humanity.

He is the gentlest director that ever piloted an uncertain play ship into the port of success. And passing patient.

When other managers would call upon profane, or even obscene, resources for subduing a bumptious actor, Mr. Milton sits quietly, while an actorial tirade dwindles into silence, and says, "Boys, you'll wreck my play if you go on at this rate."

His inseparable companion at rehearsal is a cane. He uses the cane to guide, not intimidate. He points with it. He beckons with it. He almost caresses with it. It is the baton with which he leads to greater heights, or subdues, the emotions of his actors. If an actor wanted to end a rehearsal, he would steal the impresario's cane. Though so resourceful is Mr. Milton, that if he wished to prolong the rehearsal he would borrow another. But no cane, no rehearsal.

He is fanciful. His players used to class him as fantastic. While at first trying to translate his Russian-blooded, English-schooled temperament into terms of the American stage, he would say at rehearsals, raising the inseparable cane by way of emphasis: "A little color in that tone, please. Let it be like a pear."

"Which end of the pear, Mr. Milton?" asked an impudent ingénue. He turned a benign, forgiving smile upon the impertinent one.

He is deliberate, reflective, not prone to sudden "Yeses" nor swift "Noes." He who wants a decision from Mr. Milton need not expect a downright American "I will" or "I won't." His answer is liable to be, "I will consider it."

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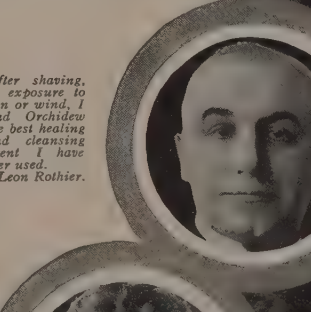

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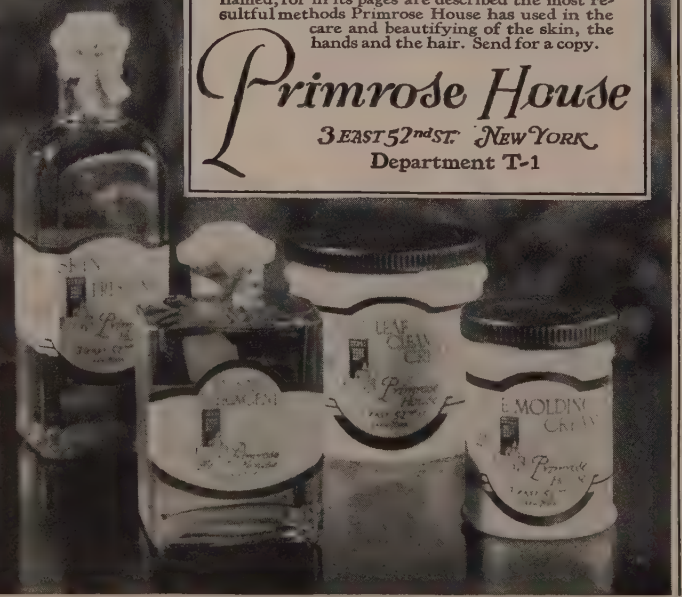


# BOSTON HONORS ITS THEATRE

(*Continued from page* 24)

that the educational aim of the theatre, despite its importance, must be incidental to entertainment. Patrons may attend concert and lecture halls for enlightenment; the theatre they seek for recreation, stimulation and pleasure. The future of the new venture must stand squarely upon the success of the players in furnishing to Boston the sort of finished, capable entertainment which in no way indicates a departure from the professional excellence of the regular offerings at the city's purely commercial theatres.

Mr. Jewett has assembled a company which should have no difficulty in achieving for itself a place in Boston's affection. Several of the names upon the first playbill are already familiar—Olive Tell, Emma Dunn, George Riddell and William Kershaw. Francis Wilson, president emeritus of the Actors' Equity Association, returned to the stage to enliven the character of Bob Acres with well-remembered success, and his engagement was continued for the production of *Rip Van Winkle.* Other plays which the trustees announce for the Winter are *Mrs. Partridge Presents,* Barrie's *A Kiss for Cinderella,* Shaw's *Cæsar and Cleopatra,* Galsworthy's *Loyalties* and *Windows,* A. A. Milne's *Mr. Pim Passes By* and *The Truth About Blayds,* Karel Capek's *R. U. R.* and Lewis Beach's *The Goose Hangs High.*

The Repertory Theatre's opening was a propitious one, which turned many from its doors long before the first performance. There were addresses and much applause for the company, Mr. Jewett, of course, coming in for his full share. But the director did not need to rest upon past laurels in his bid for favor. His enlivenment of that brave and colorful personage, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, found immediate favor with the audience. Yet distinctly, upon that occasion, the play was not the thing. It was a moment for rejoicing and for congratulation in which the audience joined Mr. Jewett and his players in mutual hopes of success.

### THE COPLEY PLAYERS

BOSTON'S other, and from one point of view, older repertory organization continues to occupy Mr. Jewett's former playhouse. The Copley Players represent an ideal in nowise differing from that of the Repertory Theatre of Boston, despite a difference in organization. In their director, E. E. Clive, who was associated with Mr. Jewett from 1918 to 1924, are happily fused the qualities which go to make up the practical idealist. Clive is an Englishman who first sought these shores to support Billie Burke in Pinero's *The Mind-the-Paint Girl.* Since 1918 he has been a popular member of Mr. Jewett's company; since 1924, when, with other members of the company, he turned aside from the Jewett management to engage upon an enterprise of his own, he has received the support of enough Boston playgoers to assure the commercial success of his venture. The company is now incorporated, with Mr. Clive holding a majority of the stock, and has launched upon a program of presenting plays which shall appeal to both the popular and more serious minds.

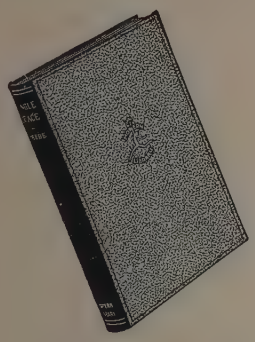
In England last Summer Mr. Clive secured American rights to a number of British stage successes, all of which are to be seen this Winter at his Boston theatre; later, the more popular pieces will have Broadway production. During the Fall and early Winter months the Copley Players are devoting their major energies to lighter entertainment, while a series of special matinées takes care of the more serious side of their clientele. Excellent productions of Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* and *The Mask and the Face,* by Luigi Chiarelli, have been among the earlier matinées.

### BOSTON SETS PRECEDENT

NO less than the trustees of the Repertory Theatre, Mr. Clive recognizes that plays which appeal only to a limited circle will not furnish the practical means necessary to carrying on a theatre. While preserving his ideal of wholesome plays, he is seeking in the popular mystery play and in lighter farces to provide the revenue necessary for the production of pieces whose stronger dramatic interest limits their appeal.

The Copley is a pleasant little playhouse, seating 1,040 and situated near the Public Library. Last year, the first under Mr. Clive's direction, the company demonstrated that it could exist independent of subscription and this year it is launching upon the sort of varied program, half idealistic, half commercial, which it believes will preserve for it a sure place in the city's interest.

Boston is faced with the undeniably pleasurable task of supporting both these repertory theatres, each of which strives to present plays which shall entertain, yet hopes that the moral lesson behind many of them will sift into the minds of the playgoers and so fulfill an educational ideal. Boston is watching with keenest interest the progress of its two ventures, and it may well be that the country at large, taking its cue from Governor Fuller's prophecy, will find their success sufficiently challenging to join enthusiastically in the national revival of repertory interest.



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4. Maximum number of words allowed for answering each question is one hundred (100).
5. No entry will be barred because of being entirely humorous nor because it is serious in tone. The judges feel that the type of expression depends entirely upon the individual's reaction to the actor, actress and play discussed. The favorite actor or actress selected may have appeared in tragedy, comedy or musical comedy. It is not necessary that the actor or actress selected shall have appeared during the past year. Only in the third question is the choice limited to plays performed during 1925.
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8. No manuscript will be returned, it being understood that it remains the property of THEATRE MAGAZINE. If, however, any article other than the prize-winning ones is published, THEATRE MAGAZINE will pay for it at the regular rates.
9. All entries to be counted must be received by us not later than February 1st, 1926. Prize winners will be announced and their answers printed in the March, 1926, issue of THEATRE MAGAZINE—out February 20th.
10. **Judges of the contest will be Arthur Hornblow, Editor of THEATRE MAGAZINE; Lawton Mackall, editor and author; and Gilbert Seldes, critic. The decision of the judges will be final in each case and no explanatory correspondence will be entered upon.**
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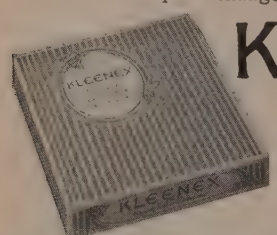


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## FREE SPEECH AND PRIM PRINT

(*Continued from page* 9)

Well, that is undeniable. Tolstoy did say that an anatomical chart is a valuable adjunct to a physician's office but a dangerous thing to hang up in front of children; and, if you are ready to accept as much as that, you will have no difficulty in assuring yourself that the plots and tones of certain plays have no place in home life. Even when home life inspired them. But precisely why we should treat the theatre as a recess from every-day squeamishness I still fail to see. This only authorizes the drama to set up as a penny-poppy-show.

But, by all the tables of probabilities, little boys and girls stand quite as much chance of being soiled by the plays they are taken to as by the newspaper accounts of those plays, or even by those flavorously guarded stories of sadistic murders which are the favorites of so many front-page columns nowadays. I saw a very young boy in a front-row seat at one of those revues which are gotten up solely to reveal the great nakedescendi. His contemplation of the altogether did not send him into any visible epilepsy.

But, after the performance, I passed a little, deserted news-stand, the proprietor of which had just been locked up for selling some of those so-called art magazines to much older youths. The discrepancy would be worth arguing if it did not concern itself with what I suspect to be sheer hocus-pocus.

No, the differences go deeper. The comparative dangers of immoral influence are only a fantastic part of them. I think it is rather the fundamental fact that you can speak all sorts of things which you cannot write —and that you do. The drama is a spoken art. It has acquired the privileges of exposing how people talk, and think or do not think when they are merely talking, with all the naturalness, impermanency and inconsequentiality of talk. It has accepted the discovery that impromptu speech is rarely deep and often broad. Congeal what is said on the stage into print, and it is doomed to be twice as vapid or twice as important—and, in either case, twice as condemning. The old warning not to "put it in writing" was not invented overnight.

Print is an unforgiving tyrant. It has no footlights to soften its features, nor masquerade to pad its bones of contention. If I write some wretched bit of rowdyism into this page, it will be here, as black as ink can make it, as long as this paper lasts. I should not mind that, and neither might you—particularly if it added some heat of excitement to the discussion. But, whatever your reaction, my little fling of smut would hit your eye in the reading as it never could have boxed your ear if I were only speaking it.

The playwrights know that. None knows as well as themselves how badly the average play reads when packed up between book-covers. They have seized upon the knowledge that nothing can ever be quite so free as free speech. What they are making of the license remains to be seen. And to be seen when their plays are printed. Shelley's gorgeous drama of an incestuous family did not have to claim the exemptions of common conversation in order to "get away with it."

## WHAT PRICE MANAGERS?

(*Continued from page* 7)

tle authority he ever had is suddenly removed, and one is left giggling weakly amid a welter of fulsome attentions which generally, far from being prompted by any genuine affection or admiration, are merely lavished with the best possible business motives.

The drama, as definite art, fades miserably in the hard glare of managerial disillusionment. People do not write plays for the joy of creating something worth while. They write plays for Mr. or Miss So-and-so, and the gratification of accruing royalties. Mr. and Miss So-and-so do not play parts for the thrill of doing good work—they play them for so much and a percentage. All this I have learned at what I hope is the beginning of my career, and I realize that the more success I achieve the more difficult it will be to keep intact the deep-rooted conviction that it is not true.

## THE PHONY CURTAIN CALL

(*Continued from page* 10)

also knows that without applause a theatre becomes a morgue, in which the spirit alike of the performance and the singers withers up and dies. The *claque* may annoy the Nordics in the audience, but at least it keeps them from going to sleep. After all, the Latin is a sly old rogue and knows through age-old experience the weaknesses of human nature. He knows that men are timid and need to be shown the way. He knows, too, that your Anglo-Saxon is terribly afraid that someone is going to laugh at him if he shows any enthusiasm over an artistic exhibition and is likewise in deadly fear that he may show enthusiasm for the wrong thing. So the *claque* is provided for an example and an instruction.

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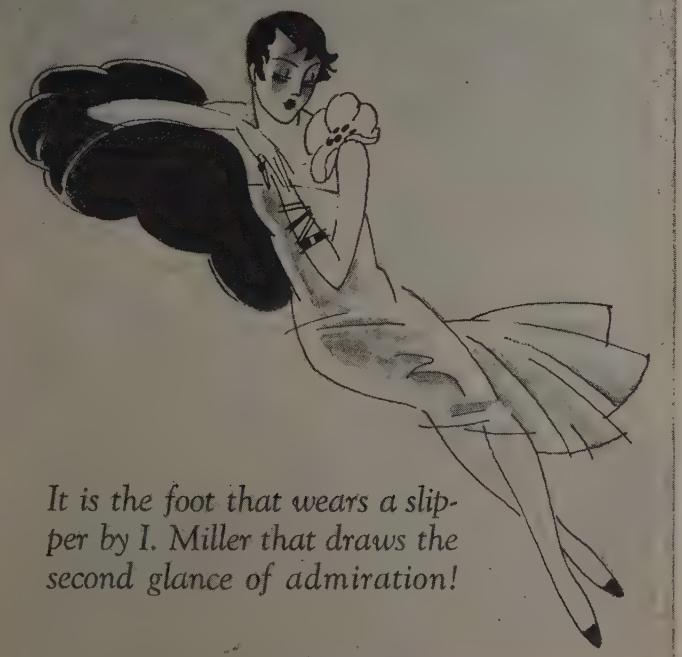

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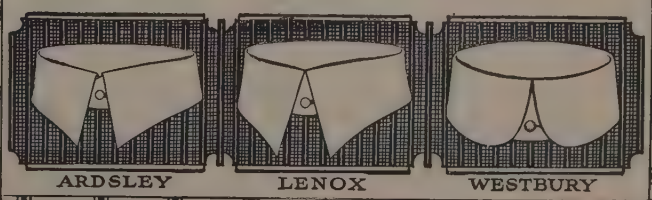

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*View of Entrance to Pasadena Community Playhouse, Pasadena, California*

## LEHAR TRIUMPHS WITH PAGANINI OPERETTA

(*Continued from page* 20)

of his Court Opera. Paganini follows the princess to Lucca, and the second act shows their blissful love, but passingly disturbed by the lady's jealousy of so many rivals. A French officer enters and brings Napoleon's command to end the romance. The climax of the second act is a big court concert where Paganini, standing erect on the darkened stage, a bright spotlight illuminating his pale face, improvises his famous "Witches' Dance," amid a group of beautiful and graceful little imps symbolic of the ire and anguish of a disappointed artist's soul. Napoleon's officer enters to arrest him, he escapes, and the third and last act shows him in a small village inn, amid smugglers and robbers, ready to leave the country. The princess appears and with repentant resignation bids him go and pursue his mission in life, which is not superficial pleasure but his art.

And well the princess may tell him so, for all we are permitted to see of Paganini in this play, he behaves not like a great artist of the Kapellmeister Kreissler type that he was, but rather like a weak-minded, weak-hearted, sluggish operetta hero who does not mind a little waltz dance now and then and is otherwise a disagreeably sober sort of a chap. At the Vienna première, moreover, the rôle was sung by Carl Clewing, once an actor but now an operatic singer who has won fame as Parsifal at the Bayreuth Festival, and, as the uncanny "devil's fiddler," is a rather portly Teutonic gentleman with a throaty tenor voice who walks through his part in a dry, matter-of-fact way. The rôle of the princess, on the other hand, was beautifully done by Madame Emmy Kosary, of Hungarian grand-opera fame, who had both the vocal gifts and dignity required by her part.

If the book lacks action, tension and swiftness, it must have had at least one virtue in Lehar's eyes: the opportunities it offers him for the display of beautifully lyric music. "To jazz or not to jazz" was the question with him, in view of the tremendous success which Bruno Granichstädten (of *Rose Maid* fame) has recently registered with *Der Orlow,* which was the first Viennese jazz operetta and a departure in this respect. Lehar uses jazz elements with discretion and some visible reluctance. The Saxophone does not even enter into his considerations, and where a discreet jazz rhythm appears, it is trimmed with beautiful orchestral effects of the solo violins, harps and celesta. It is not amiss to speak of Lehar as the creator of a sort of "lyrical jazz," after hearing his new operetta and especially the beautiful love duet of the second act. The masterly orchestration, in fact, is the great quality which lifts *Paganini* head and shoulders above most of contemporary operettas and which lends its charms even to some of the less spontaneous and inspired numbers. The accomplished musician and craftsman in Lehar manifests itself forcibly in a delightful minuet, and a number of waltzes and marches which reach the level of the great classic examples. In the masterly architecture of his chorus and solo ensembles he comes nearer to the ideals of grand opera than any contemporary operetta. Lehar's career, like that of Fall and Straus, started with grand-opera aspirations. Failing these, they consoled themselves with the fame—and revenue—of an immensely popular operetta composer. In *Paganini,* his 25th operetta, Lehar once more falls back on the grand-opera ideals of his youth; but if *Tatjana,* his maiden effort in this field, showed more talent than experience, *Paganini* marks the summit of his matured art and the supreme artistic achievement of his career.

## MR. HORNBLOW GOES TO THE PLAY

(*Continued from page* 18)

*Duck.* And now comes Eva Le Gallienne, whose special matinées of *The Master Builder* at the Maxine Elliott Theatre were so successful that the play has been put in the night bill at the Princess.

Metropolitan taste has decidedly broadened. To-day local audiences will listen attentively to sheer dialogue accompanied by a minimum of dramatic activity, for there is no play in the Norwegian's theatre so discursive in its terms of philosophic symbolism as this dramatic contest of will against will in which youth wins. There are several explanations as to just what this play means, but like all great problems, there is the individual solution for all. But it is finely compelling throughout and as interpreted by the star and her carefully selected associate players—aided by a *décor* of nice simplicity—gives a genuine thrill to the emotions.

Miss Le Gallienne makes a capital picture as Hilda Wangel. In her boy's clothes she is as alluring as her spirit subsequently shows itself in her domination of Solness, ending in his death. It is the rôle that brings out all that cerebral talent that this actress possesses in such a high degree. Equally successful is Egon Brecher as Solness, a rôle which he impersonates with a perfection of graphic skill and intelligence.

The wife is well done by Cecilia Radcliffe, and there is real distinction in William Raymond's doctor. Sydney Machet, J. Warren Sterling and Ruth Wilton in lesser rôles are entirely satisfying.

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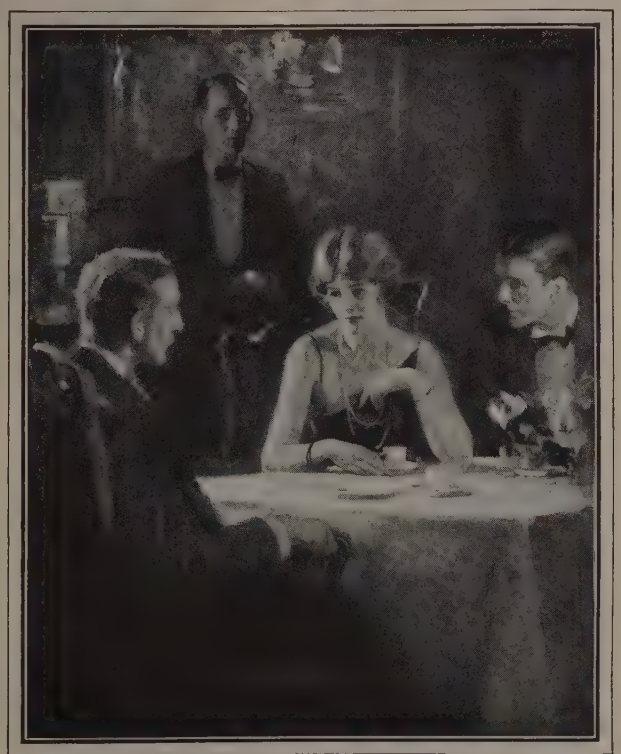

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# THE FACE AT THE BOX-OFFICE WINDOW

(*Continued from page* 22)

a delicious drowsiness and comfortable feeling of well-being.

Allan J. Schnebbe, of the Hudson Theatre, began his association with the drama humbly as a cloak-room boy at the Hudson Theatre. The treasurer, being pressed for assistance, drafted the obliging lad from the cloak-room. Schnebbe stayed on until the lure of Oscar Hammerstein's dreams drew him to Hammerstein's Victoria. He sold tickets while the impresario kept a cow and chickens on the roof to help the performers entice patrons. Later he went with the dreamer to the temporary fulfillment of his dreams at the Manhattan Opera House.

"I recall a day," said Mr. Schnebbe, "when Mr. Hammerstein sat in his chair of dreams in the rear of the lobby near the elevator. We had in the box-office a man who was a gentle Southerner, who liked the whole world, and another man, well—who didn't. The motto of the last man was 'Treat 'em rough.' One day a man came to the window, and for a reason that none of us ever knew, was offended by the Southerner. He rushed back to where the dreams were being dreamed and shouted, 'Aren't you Mr. Hammerstein?' 'Yes,' answered the proprietor. 'I want you to fire that fellow at the box-office.' Mr. Hammerstein sauntered forward to see which of the incumbents was facing the crowd. He chuckled. 'You ought to meet the other one,' he said, and walked away.

"Box-office men grouchy? Not a bit of it," said Mr. Schnebbe. "If theatre patrons would only understand that we have the line in mind! We don't mean to make our answers short. We try to be quick. And we wish that they didn't ask us whether it's a good show. What can we answer if it isn't? We're here to sell tickets."

### WOMEN IN THE BOX-OFFICE

LEE SHUBERT determined upon the innovation of placing women's faces at the box-office windows. The first of these was Peggy Collins. Miss Collins has the kind of smile that draws. It is friendly, personal, confidential, the we-understand-each-other smile. Edward Lyons, the manager of the Booth Theatre, learning of Mr. Shubert's determination, looked about for promising material. He had watched Peggy Collins sell tickets to customers at Tyson's. He engaged her. She sold the first ticket of admission to the Booth Theatre and has been in its box-office for thirteen years. Attachés at the theatre say that when President Taft went to the box-office window, smile met smile.

For eight years we have been accustomed to receiving our tickets and a swift, luminous smile from Miss Lillian Peabody at the window of the Shubert Theatre. Miss Peabody was an usher at the Winter Garden, then a chief usher. Next, because of her tact, she was placed at the telephone to answer calls in the Shubert offices. Thence to the post of assistant treasurer and finally treasurer of the Shubert Theatre. She started at seventy-five cents a performance, six dollars a week. She is receiving sixty dollars a week.

### THE TREASURERS' CLUB

HARRY B. NELMES, who officiates with notable courtesy at the Belmont, lives, breathes, eats, sleeps and dreams the Treasurers' Club of America—an assemblage of treasurers and ex-treasurers within fifty miles of New York who have been graduated into theatre managers and owners, who, like Tammany Hall, "take care of their own." They waste not their substance on expensive club-rooms. They "meet about" that they may have more money for their benevolent fund. They have a sick fund of twenty dollars a week that continues for ten weeks. There is a death fund that goes to the widow and children of five hundred dollars, to be paid at once. And an emergency fund, through which she may receive two hundred and fifty dollars a year later. In one instance a treasurer died of tuberculosis, leaving his family penniless. The club arranged a fund of three thousand dollars, to be drawn upon at the discretion of three officers. By means of loans from this fund the young widow has been enabled to keep her family together, send the children to school and start them on the road to self-support. The club is in fraternal touch with the treasurers of the Boston and Chicago theatres. When William Newman, once manager of the Empire Theatre, died in Chicago, while on tour, the Treasurers' Club of America telegraphed its fellow club to provide escort for the body and supply all needs of the widow, which was fully and fraternally done.

An annual benefit for its relief fund is given by this, one of the most admirably functioning clubs in the United States.

Elderly and distinguished members never leave the club save by death. Max Hirsch, William Muenster, Jed Shaw, Ralph Long, general manager for the Shuberts; George Appleton, of Maxine Elliott's Theatre, all in executive positions, insist upon remaining in the club. Its officers are Harry B. Nelmes, president; Allan J. Schnebbe, vice-president; Sol De Vries, treasurer; James N. Vincent, financial secretary; James F. McEntee, recording secretary, and Joseph P. Beckerton, Jr., counsel.

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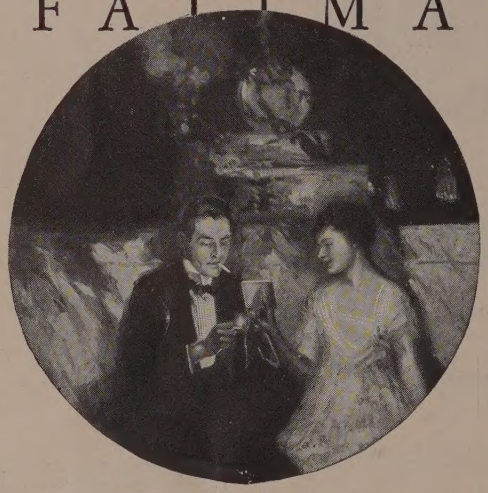

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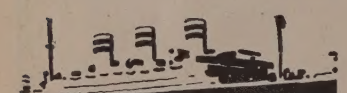

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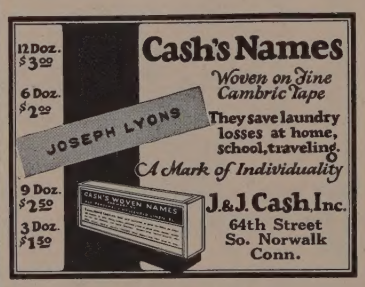




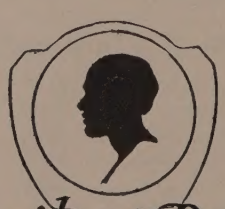

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# YOUNG WOODLEY

(*Continued from page* 50)

Woodley the day before on the Mallow Road with "The girl from Crawley's."

WOODLEY: I was with Crawley's girl yesterday afternoon.

AINGER: And what happened?

WOODLEY: Can't you guess.

AINGER: What made you?

WOODLEY: *I tell you I didn't care.*

Realizing his friend's earnest desire to help him, Woodley tries to divulge his secret but is unable. They are interrupted by the entrance of young Cope. Woodley upbraids him for going to Mrs. Simmons with the question about Riley, and learns that Vining put the lad up to it. Later Vining enters.

WOODLEY: Did you tell Cope to ask Mrs. Simmons about Riley?

VINING: Just for a joke, yes. Why?

WOODLEY: I think it was a cad's trick. A beastly thing to do.

VINING: Who asked your opinion? So lady Laura told you about it, eh? I didn't know you were on such intimate terms with Mrs. Simmy. Have you been playing the young Don Juan?

WOODLEY: What do you mean?

VINING: Did she virtuously repulse you? Hard luck. But don't be discouraged. Try our luscious Laura again. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. What did she say, Woodley? "I would if I could, but I want to be good and I'm not that kind of a girl?" Never mind, it's only done to egg you on to further flights.

WOODLEY: My God!

He grabs a bread knife from the table and rushes at Vining. A knock at the door and Simmons enters.

SIMMONS: You were attacking Vining?

WOODLEY: Yes.

SIMMONS: Why, may I ask?

WOODLEY: Oh, what does it matter?

SIMMONS: How dare you speak to me like that, sir?

WOODLEY: Dare? . . . Dare? (*A fit of shivering seizes him.*)

SIMMONS: Help me get him to the sick-room, Ainger.

* * * * * * *

THE second scene of the third act takes place in Laura Simmons' drawing-room, as in act two, the following afternoon. Laura has learned, through Ainger, of the scene in the Prefect's Room and the cause of it. She also hears that her husband is going to have Woodley expelled as an "abnormal and dangerous" boy. In fact, the Head has taken Simmons' recommendations in the matter and Mr. Woodley, senior, has arrived to take his son home.

MR. WOODLEY: Frankly, Mr. Simmons, I don't understand this. A boy doesn't attack another with a knife for no reason at all.

SIMMONS: Not a normal boy, I agree.

MR. WOODLEY: I've always found Roger a perfectly normal boy. What are these other instances of his abnormality you spoke of.

SIMMONS: His manner to me and the other masters has been extremely lacking in respect.

MR. WOODLEY: I should hardly call that abnormal, myself. What else?

SIMMONS: His behavior to my wife.

MR. WOODLEY: Do you mean that he has been annoying your wife?

SIMMONS: No, it's far more than that. I found them here myself the other day.

MR. WOODLEY: The Head Master said nothing of this affair of your wife. You told him, I presume?

SIMMONS: I—I had not done so.

Although still somewhat unconvinced, Mr. Woodley agrees to take his son away with him. There is a train at five o'clock. Mr. Simmons asks him to wait there and he will have young Woodley sent in from the hospital. While Simmons is gone Laura comes in and introduces herself.

LAURA: I want you to understand that it was my fault . . . all of it. This trouble yesterday was all due to that. They were teasing him . . . about me . . . about being in love with me. I've treated him very badly.

MR. WOODLEY: Wait a moment. I'm beginning to understand a good deal. Tell me, Mrs. Simmons, do you consider my son abnormal.

LAURA: No. He's shy and . . . rather lonely, but a charming boy. I feel that you are both rather shy—diffident—father and son—but you could conquer that, if you cared for him?

MR. WOODLEY: As you do.

LAURA: You're right, I do love Roger.

Laura leaves quickly and Mr. Woodley is confronted by his son.

MR. WOODLEY: Roger, I have been talking with Mrs. Simmons.

WOODLEY: Father, don't!

MR. WOODLEY: Very well, Roger . . . Mrs. Simmons would like to say good-by to you.

WOODLEY: Father—no.

MR. WOODLEY: Very well.

He goes out left and after a moment Laura appears.

LAURA: Roger, those things: I had to say them. They weren't true.

WOODLEY: You needn't go back on them now—because I'm going.

LAURA: I know you love me, Roger, as I love you. That love is a precious thing . . . too precious to hold. I want you to treasure the memory of it if you can, as I shall—always. Don't let me spoil love for you. It's the most precious thing in the world—but so often it is wasted and it can be so cruel and beastly. Don't let me feel that I've done that for you.

WOODLEY: Never . . . Laura, never. Laura . . . you're all the world. . . . I can't . . . (*He takes her in his arms.*)

LAURA: Roger, dearest boy . . . (*She kisses his forehead gently, then goes out left—Woodley falls onto the settee and breaks down. There is a knock on the door. Woodley pulls himself together.*)

WOODLEY: Come in. (*Mr. Woodley comes in and asks Roger if he is ready to go.*)

WOODLEY: Quite ready. (*They exit.*)

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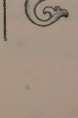

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# Heard on Broadway

(*Continued from page* 38)

All of which is but a preamble to the statement that the beard which RUSS WHYTAL wears as the old professor in *The Enemy* is absolutely genuine. He has had it for years. In an era when actors' chins are as bare as the girls one glimpses in a tableau vivant, RUSS WHYTAL has stanchly withstood the razor; and, because he is so excellent and distinctive an artist, his services are always in demand. Who knows but what his quiet heroism in wearing what others dare not wear was responsible for his being selected for the part of the brave old idealist in Pollock's drama?

The mention of Yale University in the above paragraph prompts us to disclose the fact that the beautiful MARIAN WARRING-MANLEY, who won such encomiums from the press for her enactment of the naughty, naughty lady in *Morals,* is in private life the quite domestic wife of LOUIS MANLEY, whom she married at the age of nineteen. Their young son has been proudly carried on his father's shoulder in reunion parades in New Haven as Class Boy of the Class of 1920.

The saddest story we ever heard concerning a playwright is one that is told of a well-known Broadway personage, author of one of the current hits. It seems that this author was at a rather mellow party one night with a manager friend. Quite late in the evening he began telling the manager about a million-dollar play idea which he had just thought up. Glowingly he outlined a rough scenario. The manager agreed that it sounded immense; he would think it over and 'phone him in the morning. And next morning he did telephone, saying: "I'm sort of hazy about that play idea you told me about last night, but I remember it was a corker. Come on over to the office and I'll sign up for it and give you an advance."

"What play?" murmured the dramatist uncomprehendingly. He had no recollection of it whatever.

The number of theatres in New York still increases bewilderingly. By Spring there will be no fewer than seventy "legitimate" playhouses of various sizes. One of the newest is the snug little Fifth Avenue, located at No. 66 on the street from which it takes its name. This diminutive but completely equipped playhouse, sponsored by Albert Boni, the publisher, can never be mistaken for an "experimental" theatre, because its 299 seats are mercifully upholstered.

And, lest New Yorkers sojourning in Florida languish for lack of entertainment, there is being opened in Miami a huge Hippodrome-like institution, called Pueblo Feliz, in which is to be given an elaborate historical pageant of the State. WELLS HAWKS, the press representative, hints that Florida's past is what is technically known as "colorful."

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After interesting Broadway as the temperamental Antonia in the Melchoir Lengyel play, Marjorie Rambeau will shortly be seen in *The Night Duel,* a play by Daniel N. Rubin and Edward MacGregor, in which she plays, of course, the leading rôle.

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